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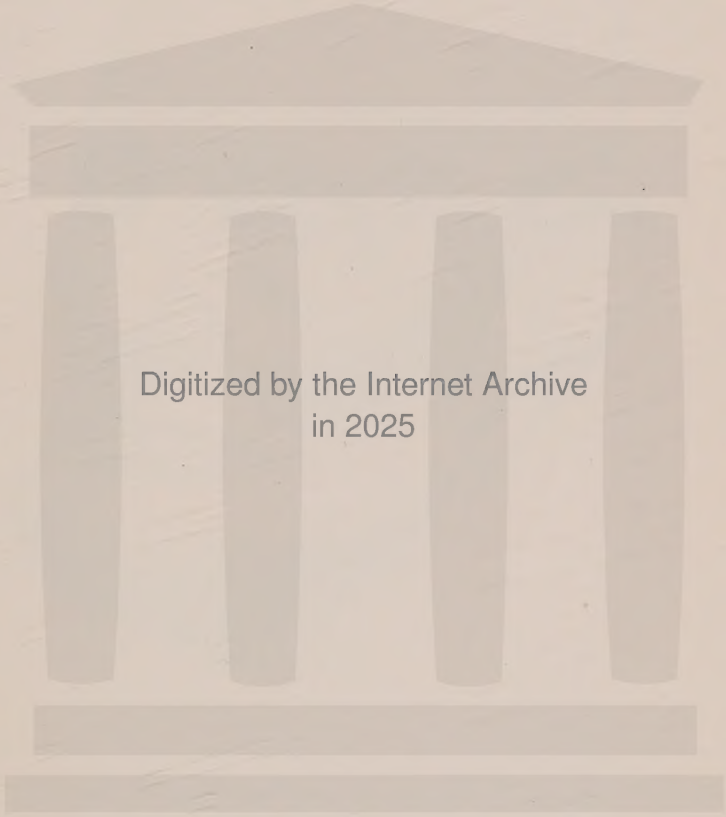
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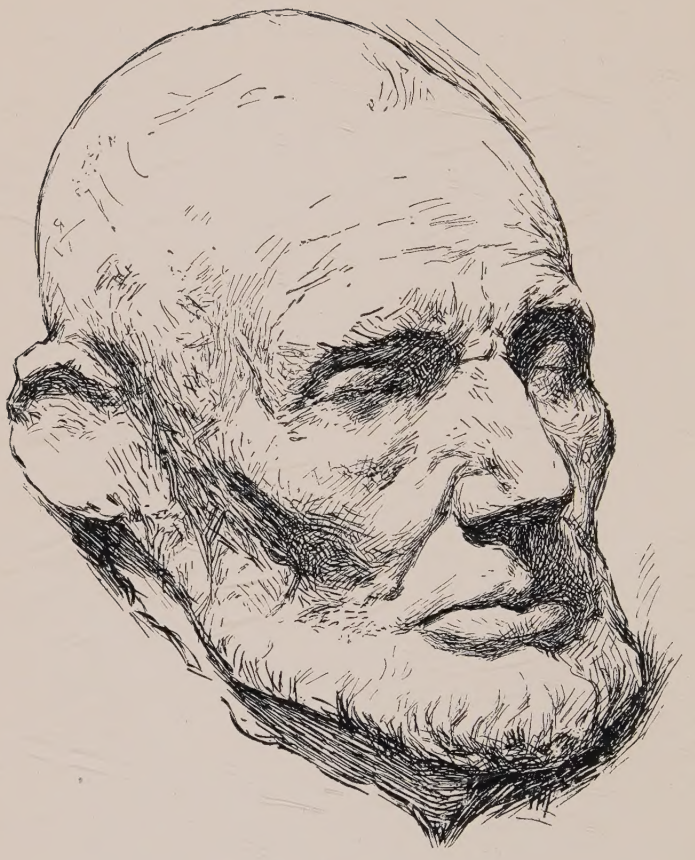

LIFE MASK OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Drawn by Kenyon Cox from a copy of the mask made by Clark Mills in February, 1865.
The original mask is owned by Colonel John Hay.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

A HISTORY

BY JOHN G. NICOLAY
AND JOHN HAY

VOLUME TEN

NEW YORK
THE CENTURY CO.

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Drawn by Kenyon Cox from a copy of the mask made by Clark Mills in February, 1865. The original mask is owned by Colonel John Hay.

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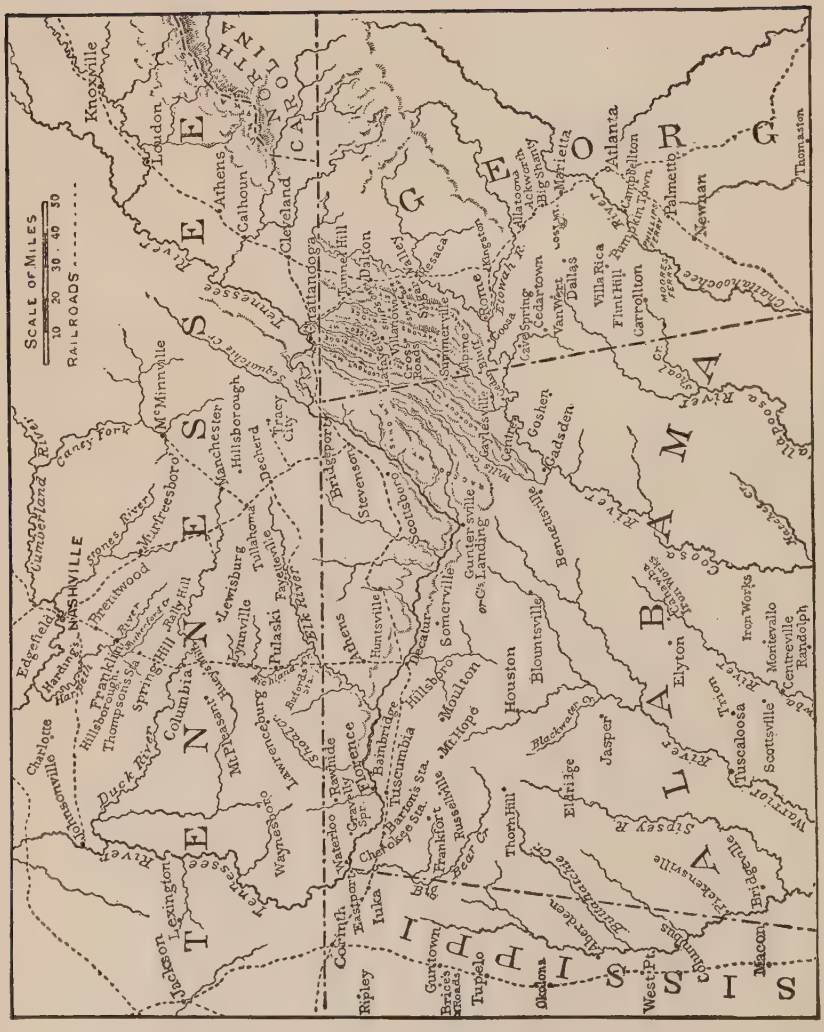
ABRAHAM LINCOLN

CHAPTER I

FRANKLIN AND NASHVILLE

WHILE Sherman was planning his march to the sea General Hood was devising a counter scheme of invasion. In spite of the rebuffs he had suffered at every encounter of arms since he had attained the object of his ambition by replacing Johnston, his hope and his courage had suffered no diminution. He had come to the West thoroughly imbued, as he says, with the spirit of Lee and Jackson. He thought by persisting in a series of flank attacks he would sooner or later destroy the National army. His courage and energy were equal to any demands that could be made upon them. His mental capacity was so limited that he was unable to see the obstacles in his way. Even now, after all the wasteful defeats which his rashness had inflicted upon his army, he was dreaming of a succession of victories more brilliant than any which had illustrated the career of his great prototype in Virginia. Although he had retreated from the front of Sherman, on the unani-



MAP OF HOOD'S TENNESSEE CAMPAIGN.

mous report of all the officers he consulted that his army was in no condition to fight a pitched battle with Sherman's force, yet even while he halted at the Cross Roads he decided, he says, to cross the Tennessee at Guntersville, to destroy Sherman's communications, to move upon Thomas and Schofield, and rout and capture their armies before they could reach Nashville. He intended then — we are quoting his own words — to march upon that city, where he would supply his army and reënforce it by accessions from Tennessee; he would then march northeast, pass the Cumberland River, move into Kentucky, take position with his left at Richmond and his right at Hazel Green, then, threatening Cincinnati, recruit his army from Kentucky and Tennessee. The dream that had beguiled Kirby Smith still had power with Hood; "the former State," he said, "was reported, at this juncture, to be more aroused and embittered against the Federals than at any period of the war." He was imbued, he said, with the belief that he could accomplish this stupendous feat while Sherman was debating the alternative of following him, or marching through Georgia. But this scheme was merely the prelude to greater achievements; if Sherman should return to confront him or should follow him from Georgia into Tennessee and Kentucky he hoped then to be in condition to offer battle, and if blest with victory, to send reënforcements to General Lee, or to march through the gaps in the Cumberland Mountains and take Grant in rear; even if Sherman should beat him he considered that this enterprise was still open to him. Thus, he says, he believed he

CHAP. I.

Hood, "Advance and Retreat," p. 268.

could "defeat Grant, and allow General Lee, in command of our combined armies, to march upon Washington or turn upon and annihilate Sherman." This fantastic vision seemed as easy as "good morning" to the courageous heart and narrow mind of General Hood.

Eager as Sherman was to march southward, and little as he cared for what damage Hood might do in the rear, he was for a long time uncertain what course he should pursue in reference to him. On the 17th of October he had said to Thomas that Hood would not dare to go into Tennessee. If he wants to, "let him go; and then we can all turn on him and he cannot escape"; and on the 26th, after his reconnaissance to Gadsden had revealed the fact that the rebel army had gone, he again said to Thomas, "If it turns up at Guntersville I will be after it; but if it goes, as I believe, to Decatur and beyond, I must leave it to you at present, and push for the heart of Georgia." Even after he was satisfied that Hood had gone towards Decatur, he told Halleck that he would wait a few days to hear what headway Hood was making and that he might yet turn to Tennessee, though it would be a great pity to take a step backward. "I think," he adds, with his humorous coolness, "it would be better even to let him ravage the State of Tennessee, provided he does not gobble up too many of our troops."

Report Committee on Conduct of the War, 1865-66. Supplement, Vol. I., p. 232.

Sherman to Halleck, Oct. 27. Report Committee on Conduct of the War. Supplement, Part I., p. 242.

Hood's intention, as we have seen, was really to cross at Guntersville, in which case he would have had Sherman upon his heels; but he postponed his ruin a few weeks by passing further west. The reason he gives for this course was his lack of cav-

Hood, "Advance and Retreat," p. 274.

alry and his desire to effect a junction with General Forrest before crossing. He did not even attempt to cross at Decatur, or, at least, the movement he made in this direction, which was promptly checked by General Granger, in garrison there, with considerable loss to the Confederates, Hood insists was intended merely as a slight demonstration. CHAP. I. Hood to Davis, Nov. 12, 1864.

Sherman, though he sometimes complains of Hood's baffling eccentricities, seems to have read his mind on many occasions like an open book. He telegraphed on the 28th of October, not knowing of the result at Decatur, that Hood would not assault that place and that Granger did not want too many men. The next day he received information of Hood's feeble demonstration against it, and of Granger's successful sortie, in which he killed and wounded a considerable number of Confederates and captured over a hundred. Granger added his belief that Hood would go to Tuscumbia before crossing; he was evidently out of supplies, as the first thing the prisoners asked for was something to eat. Hood continued on his way west and reached Tuscumbia, on the south bank of the Tennessee, on the 31st of October. 1864.

General Grant's doubts of the wisdom of Sherman's movement southward, which were so strong on the 1st of November that he recommended him to beat Hood before he started, gave way before Sherman's intense eagerness to be off, and on the 2d, as we have seen, he gave his full consent. From that moment there was no question that one of the gravest responsibilities of the war rested upon the broad shoulders of General Thomas. 1864.

CHAP. I This weighty load was well placed. Sherman said, "General Thomas is well alive to the occasion, and better suited to the emergency than any man I have." He might have gone further and said that no man then alive on the continent was better suited to the work in hand. Grant, it is true, never rated Thomas at his real value; but he acquiesced in Sherman's opinion on this as on almost all other occasions. Sherman's confidence was full and unlimited. He issued an order that "in the event of military movements or the accidents of war separating the general in command from his military division, Major-General George H. Thomas, commanding the Department of the Cumberland, would exercise command over all the troops and garrisons not absolutely in the presence of the General-in-Chief." The Departments of the Ohio and Tennessee were thus placed completely under his command. Thomas had not sought these honors or responsibilities; he accepted them most reluctantly. "I do not wish," he said, "to be in command of the defense of Tennessee unless you and the authorities in Washington deem it absolutely necessary"; but having once accepted the charge he executed it with all that human courage and human wisdom could bring to the task.

During the whole month of November the situation was extremely grave. Hood's army had, by the utmost exertion, been recruited up to its full strength. He himself says that desertions had ceased, and he started, at least, with his organization perfect and his subordinate generals entirely in harmony with him, now that Hardee was gone; with three corps of infantry, commanded by Gen-

erals S. D. Lee, Cheatham, and Stewart, comprising a force variously estimated at from 40,000 to 45,000; and he was accompanied besides by a formidable body of cavalry, under Forrest, of 10,000 to 12,000. Thomas's force was, on the 1st of November, greatly inferior to that of Hood. A large part of it was dispersed along the garrisoned posts of the southern frontier of Tennessee, and this, of course, could not be displaced. His movable force he estimated at 22,000 infantry, and a little over 4000 cavalry. He received about this time some 12,000 new recruits from the North; but these did not make up his losses by the expiration of terms of service and by the furloughing of soldiers going North. The forces upon which he most relied were the Fourth Corps, under Stanley, and the Twenty-third Corps, under Schofield; and he was promised in addition to these an excellent corps under A. J. Smith, which had been serving temporarily under Rosecrans. At the time of the battle of Nashville, however, Thomas had at hand of all arms, about 55,000.

1864. Report of Major-General Thomas, Committee on Conduct of the War. Supplement, Part I., p. 369.

As soon as Thomas learned that Hood had appeared in force on the Tennessee, Schofield and Stanley were ordered to be concentrated at Pulaski; but before this could be accomplished Forrest had made an attack at Johnsonville, one of Thomas's bases of supply on the Tennessee River, and, after a feeble and discreditable resistance on the part of the garrison of the place, had caused the destruction of several transports and a large amount of valuable Government property. Schofield arrived at Nashville on the 5th, when the advance of his corps was immediately dispatched to Johnsonville by rail; but on reaching there he

Nov., 1864.

CHAP. I. found that Forrest, having done all the damage possible, had retreated. Schofield left the place sufficiently garrisoned, and with the rest of his command marched to join the Fourth Corps at Pulaski, and to assume command of all the troops in that vicinity. Though Stanley's commission as major-general antedated his, Schofield had the higher rank as commander of a department. His orders from Thomas were to retard the advance of Hood into Tennessee as much as possible, without risking a general engagement, until Smith's command should arrive from Missouri, and General J. H. Wilson, who had been put in command of all the cavalry in the department,— and who came indorsed by Grant with the prediction that he would increase the efficiency of that arm fifty per cent.,— had time to remount the cavalry regiments whose horses had been taken for Kilpatrick.

A fortnight had been spent by Hood and Beauregard at Tuscumbia and the contemplated campaign discussed by them in all its bearings. On 1864. the 6th of November Hood telegraphed to Jefferson Davis his intention to move into Tennessee, to which Mr. Davis answered, that if Sherman, as reported, had "sent a large part of his force southward, you may first beat him in detail and subsequently, without serious obstruction or danger to the country in your rear, advance to the Ohio River." On the 12th, which was the day on which communication ceased between Sherman and Thomas, Hood telegraphed again to the Confederate President, giving his reasons for not having fought Sherman; saying he did not then regard his army as in proper condition for a pitched battle, but that it was now

Hood, "Advance and Retreat," p. 273.

in excellent spirits and confidence. He also accounted for his delays of the last few weeks by saying that Forrest had not been able to join him; that as soon as he could come up, which would be in a few days, he should move forward. He moved across to Florence on the north bank of the Tennessee on the 13th; Forrest reported the next day, and Hood brought his entire army across the river.

Hood, "Advance and Retreat," p. 274.

Sherman's intentions were not long a secret to the Confederates, and, his formidable movement to the south being now fully developed, Beauregard ordered Hood, on the 17th of November, to "take the offensive at the earliest practicable moment striking the enemy while thus dispersed, and by these means distract Sherman's advance into Georgia"; and on the same day, telegraphing to General Howell Cobb, who was reporting in panic and terror the advance of Sherman, Beauregard said, "Victory in Tennessee will relieve Georgia." Three days later Beauregard again charged Hood to "push on active offensive immediately," and on the 21st, Hood, with his usual alacrity, put his army in motion, feeling sure that he was to gain the victory so much needed and desired. The storms which in Sherman's neighborhood had been no more than refreshing showers, in Middle Tennessee had turned the roads to mire; neither Schofield nor Thomas believed that it was possible for the Confederates to move in such weather, but nevertheless Hood pushed forward with his habitual vigor intent on coming upon Schofield's rear and cutting him off from Columbia; and in this daring plan he almost succeeded. In spite of snow, sleet, and rain he pushed northward, and it was only by an equally

Ibid., p. 277.

Nov. 20, 1864. Ibid., p. 281.

Dispatches of Nov. 19, from Thomas and Schofield to each other.

CHAP. I. 1864.

vigorous and energetic march on the night from the 23d to the 24th of November that Schofield reached Columbia first. Forrest's cavalry was on the Mount Pleasant pike almost in sight of the town when Cox's division moved at double-quick, marched across from the Pulaski road, and held back the Confederates until Stanley's head of column arrived and a strong position was taken up by the whole command, covering the town on the south.

Cox, "Franklin and Nashville," p. 65.

Disappointed in his first effort to march around Schofield, Hood determined to proceed by the right flank, crossing the river some distance above Columbia, and move upon Schofield's line of communications at Spring Hill. He had not yet given up his hope of renewing in the West the exploits of Stonewall Jackson. "I had beheld," he said, "with admiration the noble deeds and grand results achieved by the immortal Jackson in similar manœuvres." He waited only one day to prepare this movement, and as he had always thought, since the 22d of July, that if he had been present in Hardee's flanking movement he could have destroyed McPherson's army, he determined this time to accomplish a closer imitation of Jackson at Chancellorsville, by riding at the head of his own flanking column. He bridged the river during the night of the 28th, three miles above Columbia, and crossing at daybreak he rode at the head of Granbury's brigade of Cleburne's division, giving instructions to remaining corps to follow, and to keep well closed up. He left General S. D. Lee at Columbia with two divisions and most of the artillery to make a heavy demonstration against Schofield and to follow him if he retired.

Nov., 1864.

In anticipation of this movement Stanley had been sent with two divisions of the Fourth Corps to Spring Hill, Cox having been left at Columbia to prevent or delay Hood's crossing there. Colonel P. S. Post's brigade was at the same time sent up the river in observation and soon reported the movement of infantry north of the stream. Fearing that this force, the strength of which was not yet developed, might come in upon the flank near Rutherford's Creek, Nathan Kimball's division halted at that point, while Stanley passed on with G. D. Wagner's division to Spring Hill, where he arrived a little before noon. In the mean time Forrest had been encountered by Wilson near Hurt's Corners, and a brisk engagement took place between them, Forrest with his largely superior force gradually crowding Wilson to the north in such a way as to give the Confederates command of the direct road from Rally Hill to Spring Hill. When Stanley, with his one division, arrived at the latter point there was brisk skirmishing on every side of him for the possession of the road, which increased throughout the afternoon.

Nov. 29, 1864.

The disposition made of Wagner's division was admirably effective; Emerson Opdycke's and J. Q. Lane's brigades covering the village and protecting the trains, while L. P. Bradley occupied a wooded knoll some three-quarters of a mile east of the pike, which commanded the approaches from that direction. By great good fortune Wagner had not only his own battery of artillery, but Captain Lyman Bridges, the artillery chief of the corps, had come up with six more batteries, not with any idea of fighting a battle, but simply to get them as far as pos-

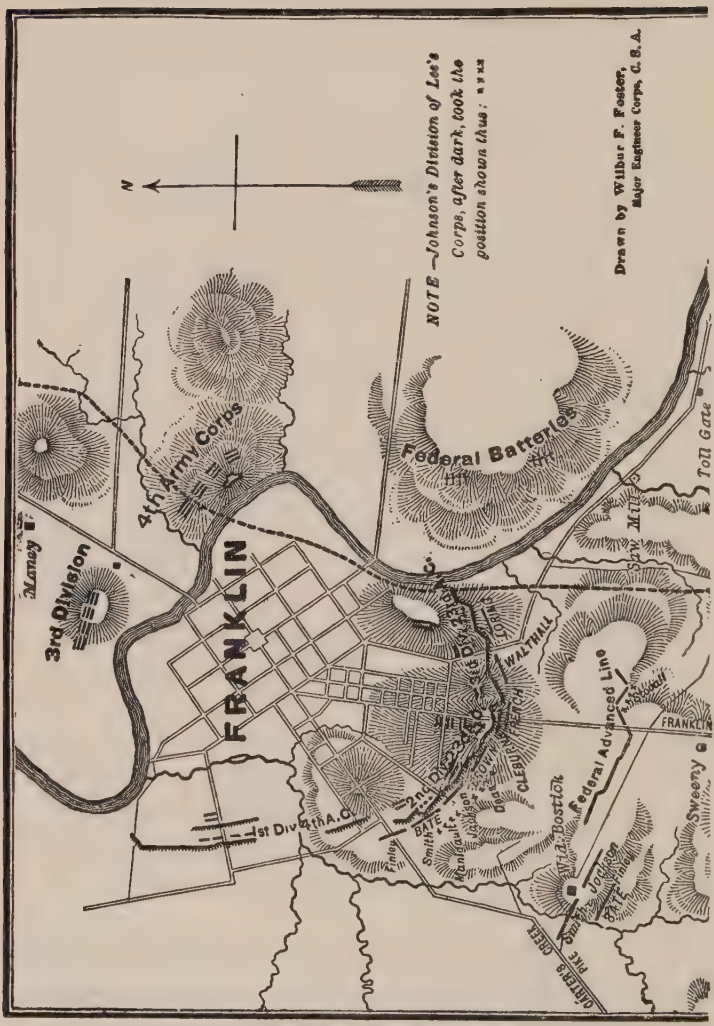
General Stanley's Report, Committee on Conduct of the War. Supplement, Part I., p. 395.

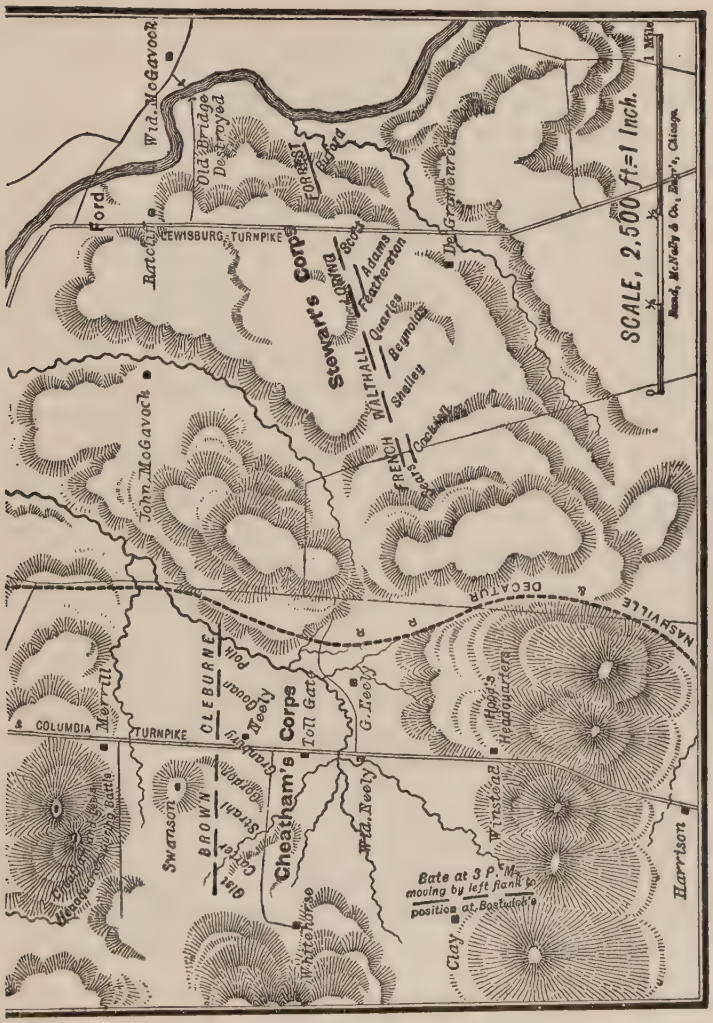
CHAP. I. sible on the road to Franklin; but the moment he arrived at Spring Hill, scenting the conflict, he placed all his guns in battery on a commanding point west of the road, where they did efficient service.

The first demonstration upon the place came from Cheatham's corps, which Hood accompanied in person, having left Stewart's corps at Rutherford's Creek; Cleburne's division, one of the finest in the Confederate army, under command of a general whose fighting qualities were proverbial, was so hotly received by Bradley's small brigade, and by the utterly disproportionate fire from Bridges' batteries, that it was impossible for the Confederates to believe that the force opposed to them was so small. Bradley's brigade was, however, very roughly handled. Its heroic commander being severely wounded it fell back under charge of Colonel Joseph Conrad towards the road, and there, with Lane's and Opdycke's brigades, made so stout a resistance that evening came on, to Hood's almost frantic disappointment, before the Franklin pike was reached. As he saw himself missing the great stroke upon which he had built such hopes, he assailed his generals with furious reproaches and adjurations. Bringing up Stewart from Rutherford's Creek he threw him to the right of Cheatham, with orders to take the pike at all hazards, although night had already fallen. But it was too late. Stewart's men went into bivouac within a few hundred yards of the road which Wagner's division, by good fighting and admirable judgment on the part of everybody concerned, still held, and with it the salvation of Schofield's army.

General Lee had succeeded in retaining General Cox with the Twenty-third Corps all day at Columbia. In the afternoon, Schofield, becoming convinced that Hood with his main army was moving upon his rear, ordered Cox to withdraw as soon as it was dark. He himself took T. H. Ruger's division, and pushed for Spring Hill. The enemy was so close to the road that Schofield had repeatedly to brush his pickets away from the path as he advanced. He reached Spring Hill about seven o'clock, and there learned that Thompson's Station, a few miles further north, was occupied by the enemy. Posting a strong force to the east of the road, to protect his marching column, he hurried on with Ruger's division to Thompson's Station, the enemy retiring as he approached. He then returned to Spring Hill, meeting there the head of Cox's column, which had come up with the greatest celerity from Columbia. The whole force then started for Franklin, and marched all night with its heavy trains and invaluable artillery past the sleeping army of Hood. Several times during the night the trains were delayed by slight obstructions, and it seemed as if they must be abandoned, or a battle be fought to save them; but by mingled good fortune and good management they all got through, the head of the column arriving at Franklin a little before daylight on the 30th, and the rest coming up during the forenoon. CHAP. I. Nov., 1864.

Schofield's orders were to cross the Harpeth River, to hold Hood in check there, and retire gradually upon Nashville, for Thomas now felt ready to fight at that place. Smith's detachment of the Army of the Tennessee had at last begun to


N
NOTE.—Johnson's Division of Lee's Corps, after dark, took the position shown thus: [illegible]
Drawn by Wilbur F. Foster, Major Engineer Corps, U. S. A.
Federal Batteries
4th Army Corps
3rd Division
Toll Gate
FRANKLIN
1st Div. 6th A. C.
2nd Division
Federal Advanced Line
Johnson
Sweeny
Cemetery Creek
Pike



MAP OF THE BATTLEFIELD OF FRANKLIN, TENNESSEE. FROM THE "BIVOUAC" FOR JUNE, 1886.

CHAP. I. arrive from Missouri, and Thomas was now equal or superior in infantry to Hood. But, to Schofield's surprise and annoyance, he found no means of
Nov. 30, 1864. crossing the river. He had destroyed his pontoons at Columbia, they being too heavy and cumbrous for the transportation at his disposition. Those he had requested from Nashville had not been sent; the light and movable train which had belonged to Thomas's army had gone with Sherman to Georgia. A staff and an army like that of Schofield's wastes no time in regrets; they scarped the banks on both sides of the river and made a sort of ford; they tore several houses to pieces, and with the planking floored the railroad bridge; they sawed the old
Cox, "Franklin, and Nashville," p. 85. posts of the county bridge down to the level of the water, and hastily covered the stumps with planks. Thus in a few hours they had three practicable bridges, and began at once crossing the artillery and trains. T. J. Wood's division, with some guns, took position in an abandoned work called Fort Granger, on the north side, where they commanded the bridges.

But while these operations were going on it became necessary to provide for receiving Hood's attack on the other side of the village. The Twenty-third Corps was posted on both sides of the main road, upon which Hood's army was expected. The village of Franklin stands in a bend of the Harpeth River, so that Cox, who commanded the lines, had his left on the stream, and extended across the Columbia pike to the Carter's Creek pike, but could not reach to the bend of the river on the other side. Kimball's division was, therefore, given the duty of closing the line on that

GENERAL GEORGE H. THOMAS.

flank. The instant the men were assigned their positions they went to work with instinctive alacrity to build such slight breastworks as the means at hand afforded. The roadway was left open to enable a double line of wagons and artillery to pass, and this opening was protected by a retrenchment a few rods further back. CHAP. I. Cox, "Franklin and Nashville," p. 84.

Wagner's division, which had held the lines at Spring Hill all the day before, and which had brought up the rear in a long night march, came in about noon. Colonel Opdycke's brigade, which had formed the rear guard, and upon which had fallen the double duty of beating back Hood's advance, and driving forward the weary and limping recruits of Schofield's army, now came inside the lines, and was posted as a reserve in rear of the center. Wagner's other two brigades were left outside the principal line, about half a mile forward on the Columbia pike, with instructions to observe the enemy, and to retire as soon as the Confederates showed a disposition to advance in force. The weary soldiers threw themselves down for a little repose behind their breastworks; neither Schofield nor his corps commanders imagined that a great battle was to burst upon them in a few moments. The artillery and trains were nearly all across the river by the middle of the afternoon, and Schofield had issued orders for the troops to pass over at six o'clock. But there was a state of things in the Confederate army which made any moderate or prudent measures impossible to Hood. His failure to destroy Schofield at Spring Hill had so embittered and exasperated him that he was ready for any enterprise, however desperate. Ibid., p. 86. Nov. 30, 1864.

CHAP. I. The irritation had communicated itself to his principal officers; his reproaches had stung them beyond endurance; and, therefore, on arriving in sight of Schofield's army, in position on the south bank of the Harpeth, there was no thought of anything among the Confederate commanders but immediate and furious attack. All the Confederate accounts agree in describing this spirit in Hood's army on the morning of the 30th of November, though Hood and his generals entirely disagree as to the cause of it.[1] Generals Cheatham and John C. Brown, and, according to their account, General Cleburne also, ascribed it to Hood's unreasonable and angry censures of their conduct the day before, while Hood attributes the new spirit of the army to mortification for the great opportunity lost and a renewed access of admiration and confidence towards himself.

NOV. 30, 1864. The assault was made at about four o'clock. The Confederates never rushed forward to battle with more furious impetus, and by a strange accident it seemed for a moment as if this desperate assault of Hood was to succeed, and he was to gain the glory he so ardently longed for of a success like Stonewall Jackson's best. Wagner's two brigades, that had been left outside the line with instructions to retire before becoming actually engaged with the enemy, stayed too long. The wide and heavy lines of Cheatham and Stewart had enveloped them on both flanks and the bayonets of Hood's center were almost touching them when they

[1] Hood's "Advance and Retreat," p. 294 *et seq.* General Cheatham's paper, read at a meeting of Confederate officers at Louisville — "Southern Historical Society Papers." Vol. IX.

turned and ran for the Union lines. They rushed over the parapets on either side of the pike, the Confederates following immediately after them, overwhelming and carrying to the rear the troops who were defending the breastworks. A gap of about one thousand feet was instantly made in the Union lines; Hood's battalions were rapidly converging to this point. If the damage were not immediately repaired, it would be irreparable; with a superior force wedged into the Union center, short work would have been made of the two wings, and nothing but annihilation would have been left for Schofield's army. CHAP. I. Nov. 30, 1864.

General D. S. Stanley, the commander of the Fourth Corps, seeing from the north side of the river the Confederate advance, started at the instant for his line. He reached it just as the breach was made and the confused mass of fugitives and Confederates came pouring to the rear. The only force available at the instant to meet them was Opdycke's brigade, which had fought all the day before at Spring Hill and afterwards had marched all night; but even while Stanley was galloping to order Opdycke to lead his men to the charge he saw that gallant commander taking position himself on the right of his line; seeing that no orders were necessary he gave none, but placed himself at the left of this heroic brigade. A shout rose among the veteran soldiers about him, "We can go where the general can"; and the brigade, supported on the right and left by Cox's men, who instantly rallied to the rescue, rushed forward and regained the lines. Opdycke's magnificent courage met its adequate reward. He fought on horseback

CHAP. I. till his revolver was empty, then dealt about him with the butt of his pistol, and descending from his horse seized the musket of a fallen soldier, and fought like a private until the intrenchments were regained. Although four regimental commanders fell in this furious charge, Opdycke was unhurt. Stanley did not fare so well; his horse was killed under him and he received a serious wound in the neck and was carried to the rear.

The battle did not cease with this fierce onset and repulse. All along the line the Confederates made attack after attack. Hood sitting on horseback, a little way behind his lines, sent them forward again and again with furious orders "to drive the Yankees into the river." To show with what desperate gallantry the Confederates were led, it need only be said that six generals were killed on or near the parapets, six were wounded, and one captured. Cleburne closed his brilliant career in front of the Union breastworks. John Adams charged his horse over the ditch, leaped it, and horse and rider were killed upon the parapet. General O. F. Strahl fought with his men in the ditch until evening came; he was struck down; he turned over the command to Colonel F. E. P. Stafford, but while his men were carrying him to the rear he was struck twice more and killed. Stafford took up his fallen sword and carried on the fight with a courage which will form the theme of fable and legend in time to come. An eye witness says that his men were piled about him in such numbers that when at last he was shot dead he could not fall, but was found the next morning, partially upright, as if still commanding the gallant dead who surrounded him.

Cox, "Franklin and Nashville," p. 95.

Along the whole line the attack and defense were carried on, until nothing but the flashes of the muskets could be seen in the darkness, with the same furious gallantry on the one side and the same immovable determination on the other.

Few battles so frightfully destructive are recorded in the wars of modern times. In the terrible fight at Ezra Church, a Union picket shouted across the lines to a Confederate with that friendly chaff common to both armies, "I say, Johnny, how many of you are there left?" To which the undaunted Confederate replied, "About enough for another killing." On this terrible afternoon at Franklin, Hood's army suffered the last killing it was able to endure. He admitted in his dispatch to Richmond a loss of "about 4500"; but Thomas in his careful report foots the Confederate loss at 6252, of which all but 700 were killed and wounded. Schofield's loss was very much less, amounting to 2326 in all, of which Wagner's unfortunate division lost 1200. Had it not been for the mistake made in those two advanced brigades, Schofield's army would have slaughtered Hood's at its leisure. Thomas, in his grave and sober manner, thus sums up the result of this signal victory: "It not only seriously checked the enemy's advance and gave General Schofield time to move his troops and all his property to Nashville, but it also caused deep depression among the men of Hood's army, making them doubly cautious in their subsequent movements."

Hood, "Advance and Retreat," p. 330.

Thomas, Report. Committee on Conduct of the War. Supplement, Part I., p. 372.

Ibid.

Schofield reported the day's work to Thomas and by his advice and direction fell back during the night to Nashville. His retreat was entirely unmolested; for Wilson, while the battle was going

CHAP. I. on at Franklin, had met and checked Forrest, holding him at the river and driving some of his detachments back. Schofield's army, on arriving at Nashville, occupied a position selected for it in advance by General Thomas. General Schofield held the left extending to the Nolensville pike; the Fourth Corps, under the command of General Wood, held the center, and the Sixteenth Corps under General A. J. Smith, who had just arrived in time to assist in the defense of Tennessee, occupied the right, his flank resting on the Cumberland River below the city. Wilson, with his cavalry, was stationed first at Schofield's left, but Steedman's provisional command having arrived at
1864. Nashville on the evening of the 1st of December Wilson was moved to the north side of the river and Steedman occupied the space from Schofield's left to the Cumberland.

Hood, as if driven by his evil genius, followed rapidly after Schofield and sat down before Nashville. He was aware, he said, of the reënforcements which had reached Thomas, and which had brought the strength of the National army above his own, but he was in the position of a desperate gamester who has so little to lose that he feels it better policy to stake all than to leave the game. He knew that Mr. Davis was urgent in his orders for the reënforcement of the Army of Tennessee from Texas; he hoped that with this expected accession he might still realize the roseate dreams with which he had started out on this ill-starred campaign. He trusted to the chapter of accidents to give him some dazzling successes which would draw the Tennesseeans and Kentuckians to his standard.

He formed his line of battle in front of Nashville on the 2d of December. Lee's corps took the center, astride the Franklin pike, Stewart occupied the left, and Cheatham the right, their flanks widely extending towards the Cumberland River, and Forrest's cavalry filling the gap. But no sooner had he established himself there than, as if determined to give himself no chance in the impending battle, he detached Forrest on the 5th with W. B. Bate's division of infantry to invest and capture, if possible, the garrison of Murfreesboro', commanded by General Rousseau. This expedition totally failed. A sally was made on the 7th by some of Rousseau's troops under General Milroy, who won that day a merited consolation for his disaster at Winchester, and inflicted a sharp defeat upon Bate's infantry, which was thereupon recalled to Nashville; while Forrest, in this useless adventure, remained away from Hood too far to be recalled when he was most needed.

While General Hood was strengthening his intrenchments and waiting in vain for good news from Forrest, and the arrival of reënforcements from across the Mississippi, which were never to come, Thomas upon his side was completing in his unhurried and patient manner his preparations for a crushing blow. He would have been ready to strike in about a week after Hood's arrival. Nothing exhibits more vividly the tension of spirit which had come with four years of terrible war, than the fact that the Administration at Washington, which had patiently allowed McClellan to sit motionless in front of Johnston from July to February, began to urge Thomas to move against

CHAP. I. Hood within twenty-four hours of the victory at Franklin. General Grant felt and exhibited this impatience in a much stronger degree. He not only sent out daily messages urging immediate action, but betrayed an irritation which reads strangely in the light of Thomas's career. He carried this feeling much further than the civil authorities at Washington, though it is true that Mr. Stanton, in a strain of whimsical exaggeration, wrote to Grant on the 7th of December, "If he [Thomas] waits for Wilson to get ready, Gabriel will be blowing his last horn." Grant the next day telegraphed to Halleck, "If Thomas has not struck yet he ought to be ordered to hand over his command to Schofield." Halleck replied, showing that the Government at Washington, impatient as they felt for immediate action, cherished a higher regard for Thomas than that felt by the General-in-Chief. "If you wish General Thomas relieved," he said, "give the order. No one here will, I think, interfere. The responsibility, however, will be yours, as no one here, so far as I am informed, wishes General Thomas removed."

Van Horne, "History of the Army of the Cumberland." Vol. II., p. 253.

Ibid.

Halleck to Grant, Dec. 8, Ibid.

This dispatch saved General Thomas his command for a few days longer; but Grant refused to be placated. Thomas telegraphed him on the 8th in extenuation of his not having attacked Hood that he could not concentrate his troops and get their transportation in order in shorter time than it had been done. Halleck answered, expressing the deep dissatisfaction of Grant at Thomas's delay, and Grant, on the 9th, with growing indignation, requested Halleck to telegraph orders relieving Thomas at once and placing Schofield in

Ibid., p. 255.

GENERAL JOHN B. HOOD.

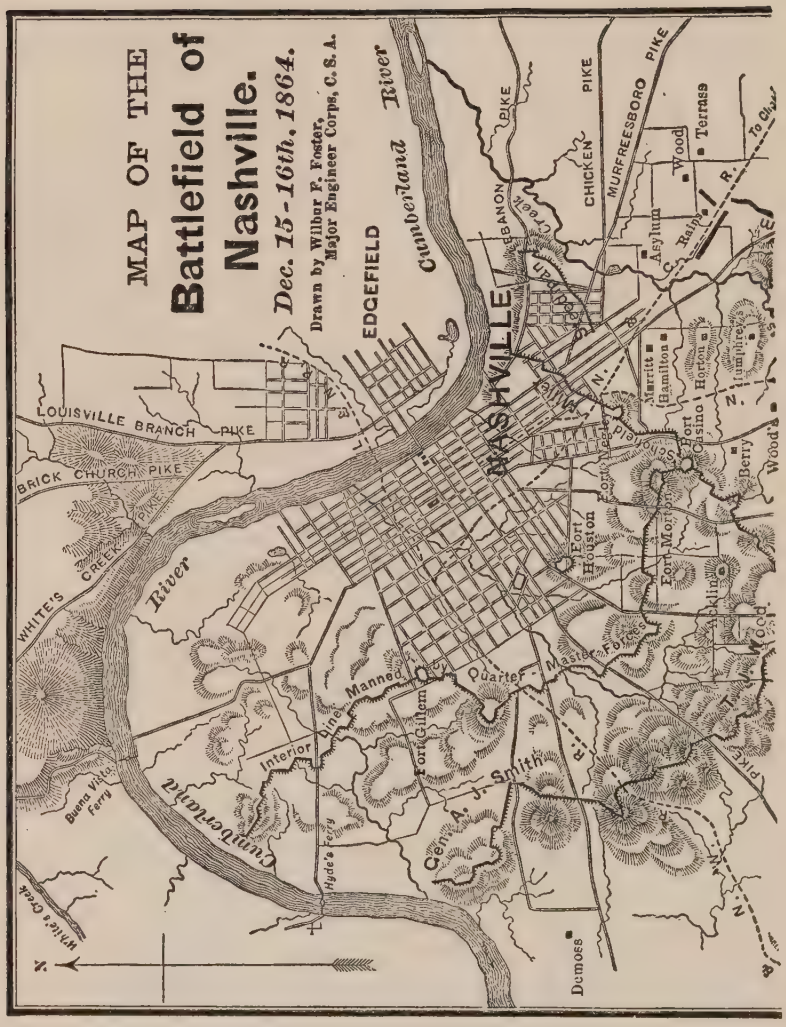
command. These orders were immediately written out, but before they were transmitted to Nashville Thomas reported in his usual manly and reasonable style, "I regret that General Grant should feel dissatisfaction at my delay in attacking the enemy. I feel conscious that I have done everything in my power to prepare, and that the troops could not have been gotten ready before this. And if he should order me to be relieved I will submit without a murmur. A terrible storm of freezing rain has come on since daylight, which will render an attack impossible till it breaks." On the receipt of this dispatch the authorities took the responsibility of delaying the order for Thomas's relief until Grant could be consulted, and he, the same evening, suspended the order until, as he said, "it is seen whether he will do anything."

Van Horne, "History of the Army of the Cumberland." Vol. II., p. 255.

Ibid., p. 256.

The spell of bad weather announced by Thomas in this dispatch continued for six days. It made any movement of either army impracticable. The rain froze as it fell, covering road and field with a thick coating of ice, upon which it was impossible for men to march, and on which every effort to move cavalry resulted in serious casualties to men and horses. General Grant knew this;[1] but his fear that Hood might elude Thomas and lead him in a race to the Ohio River became so overpowering that it clouded his better judgment, and his dispatches of censure and vehement command came raining in day by day upon Thomas, causing that most subordinate and conscientious of soldiers

[1] He says in his "Memoirs," Vol. II., p. 380: "The rain was falling, and freezing as it fell, so that the ground was covered with a sheet of ice that made it very difficult to move."


MAP OF THE
Battlefield of
Nashville.
Dec. 15-16th, 1864.
Drawn by Wilbur F. Foster,
Major Engineer Corps, C. S. A.
EDGEFIELD
Cumberland River
NASHVILLE
LOUISVILLE BRANCH PIKE
BRICK CHURCH PIKE
WHITE'S CREEK PIKE
WHITE'S CREEK
River
Cumberland
Buena Vista Ferry
Hyde's Ferry
Interior
River
Manned
Fort Gillem
Quarter
Master Forces
Gen. A. J. Smith
Fort Houston
Fort Morton
Fort Negley
Fort Casino
Fort Hamilton
Fort Merritt
Fort Lumpkin
Fort Berry
Wood's
Wood
Terrace
Asylum
Rains
Wood
Terrace
CHICKEN PIKE
MURFREESBORO PIKE
LEBANON PIKE
To Clarksville
Dumoss
N. N. W.
N. W.
N.

EXPLANATIONS.
Confederate Advanced Lines.
Confederate Lines, Morning, Dec. 15th.
Confederate Lines, 1 P. M., Dec. 15th.
Confederate Lines, from Morn to 4 P. M., Dec. 15th.
Federal Lines, 3 P. M., Dec. 15th.
Federal Lines, 4 P. M., Dec. 15th.
Scale of Miles.
NOLENSVILLE PIKE
FRANKLIN PIKE
HILLSBORO PIKE
RICHLAND
Steedman
Wood
Smith
Stewart
Cheatham
Schofield
Granny White
John Overton
Compton
Richland Creek
Harpeth R.
Old Charlotte
Vaulx
Cantrell
Porter
Bradford
Terry
Owen
Tree
Sugar Tree Creek
Mill Creek
Overton's Hill
Fesler
Bosley
Brentwood Hills
Franklin
Nashville

CHAP. I.

exquisite pain, but never for an instant disturbing the calm equipoise of his mind. He replied from day to day, acknowledging the receipt of orders, and promising to execute them at the earliest moment possible. "The whole country," he said, on the 11th, "is covered with a perfect sheet of ice and sleet, and it is with difficulty that troops are able to move about on level ground." On the 12th it was no better. He again described in a dispatch the utter impossibility of moving men or horses, and his belief that an attack at this time would only result in a useless sacrifice of life.

Van Horne, "History of the Army of the Cumberland." Vol. II., p. 257.

Ibid.

It is hard to believe, and painful to write, that after the receipt of this truthful and loyal statement, General Grant dispatched General John A. Logan, who was then visiting him at City Point, to relieve General Thomas at Nashville. He directed him, however, not to deliver the order or publish it until he reached his destination, and then, if Thomas had moved, not to deliver it at all. Even after Logan had started, Grant's uneasiness at the situation so gained upon him that he himself started for Nashville, and was met at Washington by news which electrified the country, saved General Thomas his command, and established him immutably in the respect and affection of his country. Thomas nowhere appears to greater advantage, not even on the hills of Chickamauga opposing his indomitable spirit to the surging tide of disaster and defeat, than he does during this week, opposing his sense of duty to the will of his omnipotent superior, and refusing to move one hour before he thought the interests of the country permitted, even under the threat of

removal and disgrace. In answer to Halleck's last peremptory dispatch, he replied on the evening of the 14th of December: "The ice having melted away to-day, the enemy will be attacked to-morrow morning"; and the next night he sent this laconic dispatch, "Attacked enemy's left this morning; drove it from the river below city very nearly to Franklin pike — distance about eight miles." CHAP. I. 1864. Van Horne, "History of the Army of the Cumberland." Vol. II., p. 258.

The frightful storms of rain and sleet which had held Thomas as if spell-bound had interfered equally with the mobility of Hood. Neither one nor the other could stir. Still, without the slightest trepidation, the Confederate chief waited for Thomas's attack, feeling sure, as he says in his report, "that I could defeat him and thus gain possession of Nashville with abundant supplies for the army. This would give me possession of Tennessee." So late as the 11th of December he wrote in a most encouraging strain to the Confederate Secretary of War, making suggestions as to his spring campaign, and saying with unconscious humor, "I think the position of this army is now such as to force the enemy to take the initiative." Hood, "Advance and Retreat," p. 331. Ibid., p. 357.

On the morning of the 15th of December, in the midst of a heavy fog which masked the movements of Thomas's army, he threw it forward to the long desired attack. It was the sort of weather which from time immemorial had been held as a justification for absolute inaction. The warm rains had changed the sleety roads and fields to a sea of mire, through which the troops floundered painfully. To divert Hood's attention from his real purpose, Thomas had ordered Steedman to demon- 1864.

CHAP. I. Dec. 15, 1864.

strate heavily with his command against the Confederate right, east of the Nolensville pike, orders which that energetic commander carried out with such tumultuous zeal as to draw Hood's attention almost entirely to that side of the field. Wilson's cavalry and Smith's infantry corps then moved out along the Hardin pike and commenced the grand movement of the day, by wheeling to the left, and advancing against the left flank of Hood's position. Wilson first struck the enemy along Richland Creek, which bounds the city on the west, and drove him rapidly, making numerous captures, until he came upon a detached redoubt, intended as a protection to Hood's left flank, which was carried in splendid style by a portion of Edward Hatch's dismounted troopers; another work and some hundreds of prisoners were immediately after captured by the combined assault of Smith's and Wilson's men.

But finding that Smith had not gone as far to the right as he had hoped, Thomas directed Schofield to move the Twenty-third Corps to the right of General Smith, by this means enabling the cavalry to act more freely upon Hood's left flank and rear. Schofield's two divisions, admirably commanded by Generals Couch and Cox, marched with great spirit and swiftness to the position assigned them and gained ground rapidly all the afternoon. The Fourth Corps, under General T. J. Wood, which held the center of the Union line, assaulted about one o'clock Hood's advanced position at Montgomery Hill, a gallant feat of arms executed by the brigade of Colonel P. Sidney Post. From this point a rapid advance was made, the whole line

working steadily forward until Hood was driven everywhere from his position, and forced back to a new line having its right and left flank respectively on the Overton and the Brentwood Hills, his left occupying a commanding range of hills on the east of the Franklin pike; his center stretched across from that road to another a mile to the west called the Granny White turnpike; both flanks were refused and strongly intrenched to the east and west and to the south, while the main line fronted northward. The Union lines closed rapidly about him, and in this position both sides waited for the morning. CHAP. I.

The events of the day had filled the Union army with confidence and enthusiasm, and at early dawn on the morning of the 16th Thomas sent his whole line forward. Wood pressed the Confederate skirmishers across the Franklin pike, and swinging a little to the right, advanced due south, driving the enemy before him, until he came upon his new main line of works, constructed during the night on Overton's Hill. Steedman marched out on the Nolensville pike and formed on the left of Wood, the latter general taking command of both corps. Smith connected with Wood's right, his corps facing southward, while Schofield began the morning's work in the position where night had overtaken him, his line running almost due southward and perpendicular to that of Wood. Thomas now rode along the entire line surveying every inch of the field, and at last gave orders that the movement should continue against the Confederate left. His entire line was closely crowding that of Hood, there being only a space of 600 yards between them. Dec., 1864.

CHAP. I.

At about three o'clock, Post's brigade, which had on the day before so gallantly carried Montgomery Hill, was ordered by General Wood to assault the works on the Overton Heights. C. R. Thompson's brigade of colored troops of Steedman's command joined in this desperate enterprise. "Our men," says Thomas, "moved steadily onward up the hill until near the crest, when the reserve of the enemy rose and poured into the assaulting column a most destructive fire, causing the men first to waver and then to fall back, leaving their dead and wounded, black and white indiscriminately mingled, lying amidst the abatis, the gallant Colonel Post among the wounded."[1] This was the only Confederate success of the day; but it was enough to excite the wildest hopes in the always sanguine breast of General Hood. Sitting on his horse and observing the repulse of Post's storming party, he says, "I had matured the movement for the next morning. The enemy's right flank, by this hour, stood in air some six miles from Nashville, and I had determined to withdraw my entire force during the night and attack this exposed flank in rear"; still intent on his reverent imitation of Stonewall Jackson. But even at the moment he was maturing this strategic scheme, his line, he says, "broke at all points," and he "beheld for the first and only time a Confederate army abandon the field in confusion."

Dec. 16, 1864.

Thomas, Report.

Hood, "Advance and Retreat," p. 303.

Ibid.

Immediately after Post's assault had failed, the commands of Smith and Schofield advanced to the

[1] Colonel Post was reported among the killed; the reports were afterwards corrected to "mortally wounded"; but he survived to receive the promotion he had so gallantly won, was afterwards Consul-General of the United States at Vienna, and is now (1890) a Member of Congress.

GENERAL ALEXANDER P. STEWART.

work assigned them, and with marvelous celerity and success they burst over the enemy's works in every direction, "carrying all before them, irreparably breaking his lines in a dozen places and capturing all his artillery and thousands of prisoners." The result was so sudden and so overwhelming that neither side was quite prepared for it.

Thomas, Report Committee on Conduct of the War, 1865–66. Supplement, Vol. I., p. 377.

Wilson had been making rapid progress with his cavalry on the extreme right, and had come to report his success to Thomas, who stood with Schofield directing operations; he saw the rush for the Confederate position and galloped back to his command to share in the final struggle; but as Cox says, "Before he could get half way there the whole Confederate left was crushed in like an egg-shell; . . . the arch was broken, there were no reserves to restore it, and from right and left the Confederate troops peeled away from the works in wild confusion." With the exception of the casualties in the gallant rush made by Post's and Thompson's brigades Thomas's entire loss was but slight. The Confederates abandoned their artillery, rushed across the Granny White road to the Franklin pike, and poured in a disorganized mass down the only avenue to the South which was left open to them. No rout during the war was ever more complete. Thomas captured in the two days 4462 prisoners, including 287 officers of all grades from that of major-general, fifty-three pieces of artillery, and thousands of small arms.

Cox, "Franklin and Nashville," p. 123.

Dec. 15 and 16, 1864.

Thomas, Report.

One or two of the brigades that still retained their organization formed as a rear guard on the Franklin pike, under command of S. D. Lee, and

CHAP. I. during the first hours of the night efficiently maintained a certain show of resistance to the pursuing cavalry. Night quickly closed in, and a drenching rain came down which made pursuit extremely difficult. General Grant was never satisfied with the swiftness and efficiency of Thomas's pursuit of Hood's beaten army; yet with the exception of that historic chase which began at Petersburg and ended at Appomattox there was no other pursuit of a beaten army during the war so energetic, so prolonged, and so fruitful. The cavalry column came up with the enemy's rear guard four miles north of Franklin. They charged it in front and flank, capturing 413 prisoners and three colors. They drove the Confederates through Franklin, capturing 2000 wounded in the hospitals there, and liberated some hundreds of Union prisoners. The cavalry pressed on, followed by the infantry, who moved with such expedition as was possible over the frightful roads, incumbered by all the débris of two armies.

DEC., 1864. On the 18th, the enemy crossed Harpeth River, destroying the bridges behind them. The profuse rains of the month now began to show their effects in the swollen water-courses. At Rutherford's Creek they found the stream, which was usually a rivulet, a foaming torrent. It took two days to get the command across; material for a bridge over Duck River was hastily pushed forward to that point so that Wood crossed late on the 22d, and got into position on the Pulaski road. Hood's army, though still retreating at the top of their speed, had by this time gained the powerful assistance of Forrest, who had joined them at Columbia; and Hood had formed a strong rear guard of four

thousand infantry, under E. C. Walthall,— Lee having been wounded on the 17th,— and all his available cavalry. "With the exception of his rear guard," says Thomas, "his army had become a disheartened and disorganized rabble of half-armed and barefooted men, who sought every opportunity to fall out by the wayside and desert their cause to put an end to their sufferings." On Christmas morning Thomas, still continuing the pursuit, drove the enemy out of Pulaski, and chased him towards Lamb's Ferry over roads which had become almost impassable "and through a country devoid of sustenance for man and beast." The Confederates were, however, more fleet than their pursuers; the swollen rivers and other accidents everywhere favored them, and during the 26th and 27th Hood crossed the Tennessee River.

Thomas, Report Committee on Conduct of the War. Supplement. Part I., p. 379.

Dec., 1864.

Even here he did not feel in safety, but continued his headlong retreat to Tupelo, Mississippi. From there, on the 13th of January, he sent a dispatch to the Confederate War Department requesting to be relieved from the command of the army. After consultation with General Beauregard, he issued furloughs to most of his Tennessee troops; his army, what there was of it, rapidly melted away. Four thousand of them went to join Maury at Mobile. It is hard to say what became of the rest. After the pressure of public opinion had forced the Richmond authorities to the bitter necessity of reappointing General Johnston to the command of that spectral army which was expected to oppose the triumphal march of Sherman to the North, the three corps of Hood's army which reported to him consisted of 2000 men

1865.

Hood, "Advance and Retreat," p. 307.

CHAP. I. under C. L. Stevenson,—S. D. Lee's successor,—2000 under Cheatham, and 1000 under Stewart; in addition to these there were, he says, little parties who gradually made their way into North Carolina, as groups and individuals, and were brought to him at last by General S. D. Lee. The pursuit of Hood's retreating army was not continued longer by Thomas. On the 29th of December, a small force of cavalry of only 600 men, under command of Col. W. J. Palmer, of the Fifteenth Pennsylvania, went roving through North Alabama and Mississippi striking the enemy here and there, destroying one day his pontoon trains, on another day a large supply train, sabering and shooting his mules, attacking the Confederate general W. W. Russell near Thorn Hill, routing him, capturing some prisoners, burning some wagons, and then proceeding at his leisure back to camp at Decatur, after a march of over 250 miles, reporting a loss of one killed and two wounded.

Johnston, "Narrative of Military Operations," pp. 372, 373.

1864.

Mr. Davis promptly complied with Hood's request for relief, and he bade farewell on the 23d of January, 1865, to what was left of the army of 50,000 men which Johnston had led with such unfailing prudence and wisdom from Tunnel Hill to Atlanta, and which Hood had dashed to pieces against the National breastworks on every field from Atlanta to Nashville. Hood then visited Virginia, was kindly received by Jefferson Davis, with whom he always remained a favorite, even amid the impending ruin of the Confederacy, and was on his way to Texas with instructions to bring a new army from that remote but gallant State to the rescue of the falling cause, when he heard of

Lee's surrender. He tried for many days to cross the Mississippi, several times, as he says, "hotly chased by Federal cavalry through the wood and cane-brakes"; but, at last, making a virtue of necessity, he surrendered to General John W. Davidson, at Natchez, on the 31st of May.

CHAP. I.

Hood, "Advance and Retreat," p. 311.

1865.

CHAPTER II

THE ALBEMARLE

CHAP. II.

THE successive captures and recaptures of the town of Plymouth, in North Carolina, were episodes of the war so unimportant that they would scarcely claim a place in history were it not for the memorable naval fights in the spring of 1864 in which the Confederate ironclad *Albemarle* gained great distinction, and the splendid heroism of a young sailor, by which, in the autumn of the same year, she was destroyed. This famous vessel was slowly and painfully constructed, far inland, in a cornfield on the banks of the Roanoke River, about thirty miles below Weldon. The same officer who had changed the *Merrimac* into the ironclad *Virginia* used the experience acquired in that service in the building of the *Albemarle.* Nearly everything requisite in shipbuilding was lacking; but, in spite of all difficulties, the vessel was built at last, and slid from the bluff into the river without springing a leak. She measured 152 feet in length, 45 in width, and, with her armor on, drew eight feet. In general construction she resembled all the other Confederate ironclads. Her casement, or shield, was sixty feet long, sloping to the deck at an angle of forty-five degrees; plated with two courses of two-

Gilbert Elliott, "Battles and Leaders." Vol. IV., p. 626.

inch iron, rolled at the Tredegar Works. She was armed with two rifled Brooke guns, mounted on pivot carriages, so disposed that each gun commanded three portholes. Her beak was of oak, plated with two-inch iron. She was a year under construction; rumors of her progress occasionally transpired, and the brave and vigilant commander, C. W. Flusser, to whom her first sortie was to be mortal, warned the department in the summer of 1863 that a formidable craft was in preparation in the river. CHAP. II.

It would have required no considerable expedition to destroy her in the yard, but General Grant's attention was at that time fully occupied with other matters. She was not completed until April, 1864, and her first service under her captain, J. W. Cooke, was to assist General Hoke in an attack upon the town of Plymouth, which was held by a small Union force under General H. W. Wessels. Hoke's division marched down and surrounded the place, his two flanks resting on the river above and below the town. It was the task of the *Albemarle* to clear away the navy from the river front. The attack began on the 18th of April, and lasted all day, with no advantage to the Confederates, Wessels's troops, and the two gunboats *Miami* and *Southfield*, under the intelligent direction of Flusser, repulsing every attempt to take the place; but on the next day the intervention of the *Albemarle* put a different face on the affair. She dropped down the river in front of the town by night, the fire of the fort rattling harmlessly against her shield. Flusser, warned of her coming, made ready for action, and steamed up to meet her with the *Miami* and the *Southfield* chained 1864.

MAPS OF THE COAST OF THE CAROLINAS.

together. The adversaries met in the first glimmer of dawn. The ram struck the *Miami* a slight blow, and, passing on, with one thrust of her beak tore open the side of the *Southfield*, which filled and sank almost immediately. The *Miami* opened upon the ram with her batteries, with results fatal only to her own brave commander. Flusser, who was personally firing the first shots, was struck by a fragment of a Dahlgren shell, rebounding from the iron side of the ram, and instantly killed. His successor in command seeing that if he remained he would simply be sacrificing his vessel uselessly, retired down the river to Albemarle Sound. The post of Plymouth, surrounded on every side, fell into the hands of the Confederates.

Report of Acting-Master Wells.

The destruction of the *Albemarle* was thenceforward the principal object of the naval squadron in the Sound. Captain Melancton Smith, an able and experienced officer, was dispatched to the scene of action for that especial service. He rapidly made the necessary arrangements for attack. His main reliance was upon his guns and torpedoes; ramming was to be resorted to in the discretion of commanders, though the peculiar construction of the double enders, of which his fleet consisted, rendered this a doubtful expedient. The *Albemarle* did not wait to be attacked, but sallied forth at midday of the 5th of May, with the intention of clearing both Albemarle and Pamlico Sounds of the Union fleet, and, if possible, regaining control of Hatteras Inlet. She was attended by the transport *Cotton Plant*, and the captured storeship *Bombshell*. Smith speedily got his vessels under way, the flagship *Mattabesett* leading, the *Sassacus* and

Lee, Orders, April 23, 1864. Report Secretary of the Navy, Dec. 5, 1864.

Gilbert Elliott, "Century Magazine," July, 1888.

CHAP. II. the rest of the fleet following, eight vessels in all, carrying 32 guns, besides 23 howitzers. Against this heavy armament the undaunted ironclad came
May 5, 1864. on with her two guns; and so enormous is the power of invulnerability that the fight was not altogether unequal. We feel in reading the epics and sagas of the past, that Achilles and Siegfried are safe no matter what the number of their adversaries, unless the exposed heel or the mark of the linden leaf is touched. Without the ironclads in Mobile Bay, all the valor of Farragut would have been of no avail against the tough sides of the *Tennessee*. The *Cotton Plant* was at once ordered back out of danger, and the *Bombshell*, at the first onset of the Union fleet, surrendered; but the *Albemarle* held her own sturdily; her two pivot guns, working in safety and at leisure, seemed to quadruple themselves by dint of efficiency.

The battle began at a quarter before five o'clock; the *Albemarle* fired two damaging shots into the *Mattabesett* and then tried to ram her, but the swifter ship evaded the blow and poured a broadside upon the ironclad. The *Sassacus* coming up did the same, and the other vessels in succession did what they could; their principal danger was firing into, or fouling, each other. Their fire was by no means ineffective; the boats of the *Albemarle* were shot away, her smoke-stack so injured that it almost ceased to draw, many of her plates were started and shattered, and her after gun was broken and disabled; but to the eyes of the officers in the Union fleet, this concentrated fire appeared to have no more effect on the iron sides of the monster than so much thistle-down. Lieutenant-Commander

Gilbert Elliott, "Century Magazine," July, 1888.

F. A. Roe, of the *Sassacus*, therefore resolved to try the desperate expedient of ramming the ironclad. He drew off to a distance of some 200 yards, and putting on a full head of steam rushed upon the *Albemarle* at a speed of ten knots an hour. He struck her just abaft the casemate on the starboard side with a shock which caused every timber to groan, though nothing gave way. There was a moment of consternation on board the ram, but seeing they did not sink the crew immediately rallied to their guns and continued the fight. The *Sassacus* steamed heavily, hoping to force the ram under water; and in this Roe might have met the success his bravery deserved, but for a shot from the *Albemarle* which passed through his boiler, and in an instant filled his vessel with scalding steam, disabling his engine and sixteen men. Crippled as he was, his engine room inaccessible, the vessel filled with smoke and steam and the shrieks of scalded sailors, Roe still fought his guns with imperturbable gallantry, hurling upon the *Albemarle* his hundred-pound shot, which rebounded in pieces on his own deck. He slowly dropped out of the fight, and a period of considerable confusion ensued, as the result of two mistakes; the flag of the *Albemarle* being shot away, it was thought she had surrendered, and the *Wyalusing* erroneously reported herself as sinking; this caused a temporary cessation of the battle, which was not renewed with much energy until night closed in.

Roe, Report, May 6, 1864. Report Secretary of the Navy.

Ibid

The *Albemarle*, whose riddled smoke-stack refused to draw, was able, by burning the lard and bacon on board, to steam back to Plymouth.

CHAP. II. She had gained great glory throughout the Confederacy by her two battles, and Captain Cooke was promoted to the command of the rebel navy on the coast of North Carolina. With a few knots more speed she could have destroyed the whole Union fleet; as it was, the capture of a fort with a brigade of prisoners, the destruction of a gunboat, and a drawn battle lasting a full afternoon with a squadron mounting 55 pieces, were no inconsiderable claims to renown. She came out of the Roanoke but once after this battle; on the 24th of May she was seen by a picket boat, apparently dragging for torpedoes. A single shot fired at her caused her to retire up the stream. She lay at her berth by the wharf at Plymouth until the
1864. 27th of October, when her name was associated forever with one still more glorious.

Of course the Navy Department could not count upon this long inaction, and so long as the *Albemarle* lay substantially unhurt at Plymouth she was a source of constant anxiety to the squadron in the Sound. They had no ironclads of sufficiently light draft to cross the bar at Hatteras Inlet; several were in course of construction, but it was not safe to wait for their completion. A party of volunteers from the *Wyalusing* was sent to destroy
Smith, Report, May 30, 1864. Report Secretary of the Navy. the ram with torpedoes, late in May; but an untoward accident, the fouling of their line by a schooner, prevented a success which was merited by their courage and good conduct. September had come before the plan and the man were found that were adapted to the work. The scheme was to fit out two small steam launches rigged with spar torpedoes, and armed with how-

itzers, which should try to reach the ram at night by surprise; the man was Lieutenant William B. Cushing, who had attracted the attention of his superiors by several noteworthy examples of coolness and daring. Once he had landed by night with two boat crews at the town of Smithville, being rowed under the very guns of Fort Caswell, walked with three men to General Louis Hébert's headquarters, captured an officer of engineers, the general himself being absent in Wilmington, and had come safely away with his prisoner, from a post garrisoned by a thousand men.

At another time, having volunteered to destroy the ironclad *Raleigh*, supposed to be lying in the Cape Fear River, he went in his cutter up the stream, eluding the sentries on either shore, landed within seven miles of Wilmington, thoroughly reconnoitered the place, found the *Raleigh* a total wreck, and after three days of adventures in which his luck and daring were equally amazing he was intercepted on his return down the river in the moonlight by a whole fleet of guard boats and his escape apparently cut off. Turning about, he found himself confronted by a schooner filled with troops. Instead of surrendering he dashed for New Inlet; and, seconded by his crew, who always seemed when with him as insensible to danger as himself, he escaped into the breakers, where the enemy dared not follow, and safely rejoined his ship. His perfect coolness in critical emergencies was a matter of temperament rather than calculation. He prepared everything in advance with a care and judgment remarkable in one so young; but when the time of action came, the immediate peril

CHAP. II. of death was nothing more than a gentle stimulant to him; he enjoyed it as he would a frolic. He was a handsome youth, 21 years of age; six feet high; with a beardless face and bright auburn hair.

After conferences with Admiral Lee and Mr. Fox, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Cushing went to New York and found two launches, at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, suited to his purpose. They were 46 feet in length, 9½ feet wide, and drew about 40 inches. While they were being equipped for the work by Engineer-in-Chief W. W. Wood of the navy, Cushing visited his mother in Fredonia, N. Y., and confided to her his intention, saying he needed her prayers. Returning to New York he took his launches out and tested his torpedoes, and then started them southward, by way of Chesapeake Bay; one of them on the way was attacked by guerrillas and burned. At Hampton Roads Cushing refitted his only remaining boat, and passing through the Dismal Swamp came to Roanoke Island. There he gave out that he was bound for Beaufort and steamed away by night to join the fleet which was lying off the mouth of the Roanoke River, the senior officer being Commander W. H. Macomb, whose flagship was the *Shamrock*.

Here for the first time Cushing disclosed to his officers and men the purpose of his expedition, leaving them free to go or stay as they preferred; all wanted to go with him.[1] Several others volunteered, among them Paymaster Francis H. Swan, whose anxiety for a fight was paid by a severe

[1] In this chapter we have made free use of Cushing's admirable account of his expedition, printed in "Battles and Leaders of the Civil War," Vol. IV., p. 634. We have also used J. Russell Soley's "The Blockade and the Cruisers."

wound and four months in Libby prison; W. L. Howarth, Cushing's tried and trusted companion in former adventures, and two other master's mates, Thos. S. Gay and John Woodman; two engineer officers, Steever and Stotesbury, and eight men. A cutter from the *Shamrock* was taken in tow with eleven men; their duty was to board the wreck of the *Southfield*, if the guard which was known to be posted there should discover the party as they passed. A false start was made on the night of the 26th; the boat ran aground, and so much time was wasted in getting her off that the expedition was postponed for twenty-four hours. At midnight, in rain and storm, the devoted little party set forth. Fortune favored them at first; they passed the wreck of the *Southfield* without a hail, and came in view of the few lights of Plymouth.

Cushing, Report, Oct. 30, 1864. Report Secretary of the Navy.

The little noise made by the low-pressure engines was muffled with tarpaulins, which also concealed every ray of light from the launch. Cushing stood near the bow, connected by lines with every part of the boat as the brain is by nerves with every limb. He held a line by which he was to detach the torpedo from the spar which carried it, when it should have been shoved under the overhang of the ram; another, by which he was to explode it after it had floated up to a point of contact; and two more, one attached to the wrist and one to the ankle of the engineer, by which he directed the movements of the boat. He had two complete plans in his mind; one was — to use his own nervous phrase — "to take the *Albemarle* alive," by landing some distance below, stealing up, and dashing on her from the wharf; but just as he was

CHAP. II. sheering in close to the lower wharf he heard a dog bark, a sentry hail, and a moment afterwards a shot was fired. Instantly dismissing his first plan, Cushing ordered the cutter to cast loose and row to capture the *Southfield's* picket; and then, putting on all steam, he rushed for the ram, whose black bulk loomed in the darkness before him. By the light of a fire on the wharf he discovered that she was surrounded by a boom of logs extending all around her for the express purpose of protecting her against torpedoes. A brisk fire opened on the launch from the ship and the shore, but his keen intelligence was only sharpened by the danger, and he saw at a glance that on the course he was taking he could not get over the boom. He therefore sheered off a hundred yards, and then turning came at full speed to strike the logs at right angles, hoping thus to slide over them, and getting inside the sort of pen they formed, to reach the ram.

The fire had by this time become severe; Swan was wounded; Cushing's clothes were torn by three bullets; the sole of his shoe was carried away, but he was unhurt and very happy. Being hailed again, as he dashed forward, he shouted, "Leave the ram. We are going to blow you up," a response as considerate as it proved truthful. His crew, catching the infection, also chaffed the Confederates, while Cushing, not wishing to let the enemy do all the firing, sent a charge of canister among them at short range, which, he said, "served to moderate their zeal and disturb their aim." The launch touched the logs and slid gently over them; the spar was lowered; Cushing, as cool in that shower of deadly missiles, and in face of a hundred-pound rifle,

Cushing, 'Narrative," *ut supra.*

COMMANDER WILLIAM B. CUSHING.

whose muzzle he could now plainly see, as a skilled artisan at his bench, watched for the proper instant, detached the torpedo with a line held in his right hand, waited a moment for it to rise under the hull of the ram, and then pulled with the left hand, which had just been cut by a bullet. At the same instant the 100-pounder was fired; the grape shot, at ten feet range, came roaring over Cushing and his crew, just missing them; but the torpedo had done its work, and a suffocating mass of water rose from the side of the *Albemarle* and fell upon the launch, half filling it, and drenching the crew. Cushing, who thought his boat had been pierced by the shot from the ram, saw there was no hope of saving her; being summoned to surrender he refused, and ordered his crew to save themselves; he threw off his sword, revolver, coat, and shoes and jumped into the water.

Oct. 27, 1864.

Cushing, Report, Oct. 30, 1864. Report Secretary of the Navy.

The *Albemarle's* commander did not at first realize what had happened. He heard a dull report as of an unshotted gun; a fragment of wood fell at his feet. He sent a carpenter to examine the hull, who reported "a hole big enough to drive a wagon in." The *Albemarle* was resting in the mud; she had sunk so little her own officers did not perceive it, and the victors were unconscious of their success. The men in the launch were captured, all but three, who had followed Cushing in his desperate leap into the icy river. Two of these were drowned; the third got ashore and was saved.

Captain A. F. Warley.

Perhaps no event of his life gave such proof of Cushing's extraordinary nerve and endurance as his escape. He swam out in the darkness, knowing there was no shelter for him but the fleet, twelve

CHAP. II. miles away. He evaded the rebel boats which were rowing about the river until he was well out of sight. Nearing the shore, he found Woodman drowning, and kept him up ten minutes with his own fast-failing strength, but could not bring him to land. Cushing at last managed to reach the muddy shore, and fell, half in and half out of the water; there he lay until daybreak, unable to move.

Oct. 28, 1864. When the dawn came, he found himself lying on the edge of a swamp, in full view of a sentry, not forty steps from a fort. When the sun had warmed his chilled limbs a little, he attempted to crawl away from his exposed position, and, being covered with mud, he succeeded, by sliding on his back, inch by inch, though soldiers were several times almost near enough to tread on him. After gaining the swamp he wandered for several hours among the cypresses, scratched and torn at every step by thorns and briers. At last he found an aged negro, and the disposition he made of him is noteworthy. Instead of employing him to assist in his escape, Cushing plied him with greenbacks and texts of Scripture until he induced him to go into Plymouth and get news of the last night's affair.

The tidings he brought back were such a cordial to the forlorn victor, that he plunged into the swamp with new heart and hope. In the afternoon he came upon a stream where there was a picket post of soldiers who had a small skiff fastened to a cypress root in the water. Watching them till they sat down to eat, he swam to the boat, noiselessly unfastened it, and drew it around a bend in the river, then got in and paddled for life and liberty. He floated on through twilight to darkness, out of

the Roanoke into the broad Sound; the night was providentially still and calm; he steered by the stars till he reached the picket vessel *Valley City;* he had strength enough left to give a feeble hail, then fell with a splash into the water in the bottom of his boat. He had paddled, he says, "every minute for ten successive hours, and for four my body had been 'asleep,' with the exception of my two arms and brain." At first they took the skiff for a torpedo boat, and were more inclined to give him a volley of musketry than to pick him up; but he soon established his identity, refreshed himself, and went to report to the flagship, where he was received as one risen from the dead with salutes of rejoicing; the night air became gay with rockets, and all hands were called to cheer ship. Perhaps the most remarkable words in the simple narrative this heroic youth has left of his strange adventure are these, with which it closes: "In the morning I was again well in every way, with the exception of hands and feet, and had the pleasure of exchanging shots with the batteries that I had inspected on the day previous."

CHAP. II.

Cushing, "Narrative," *ut sup.*

On the 30th of October, Commander Macomb, having ascertained that the direct channel was obstructed, passed into the Roanoke above Plymouth by Middle River, and thus took the place in reverse. A spirited engagement between the fleet and the forts began about eleven in the morning of the 31st; a fortunate shot from the *Shamrock* exploded the enemy's magazine, and the Confederates hastily evacuated their works; the victorious sailors, rowing ashore, captured the rear guard with twenty-two cannon and a large quantity of stores.

1864.

CHAPTER III

FORT FISHER AND WILMINGTON

CHAP. III. THE ports of Wilmington and Savannah, after the capture of New Orleans and the strict blockade of Charleston, and especially after the
1864. occupation of Mobile Bay, became the most important and valuable means of communication with the outside world which were left to the Confederacy. In spite of the utmost efforts of the National vessels, an extensive trade was carried on between these ports and those West Indian islands which had been taken as points of transshipment for the contraband goods exported from England to the Confederacy, and for the cotton which formed the only coin by which the South paid its debts to Europe. There was a peculiarity about the harbor of Wilmington which rendered it the favorite port of entry for blockade runners. The city stands on the Cape Fear River, about twenty-eight miles from the sea. There is a good entrance to the river at its mouth, and another by New Inlet, six miles in a straight line to the north; the space between them, merely sand and shallow water, is called Smith's Island, the southern extremity of which is the sharp headland of Cape Fear, beyond which stretch the Frying Pan Shoals for ten miles. The southern

entrance was protected by Fort Caswell; the northern by Fort Fisher; between the two, on the mainland, was the village of Smithville, where the blockaders lay in wait, watching their chance to dart out to sea by one or the other sally-port. Those wishing to enter would wait outside till evening fell, and then dash in through the blockading fleet to the safe shelter of the guns of one or the other fort.

Legitimate trade had ceased immediately on the proclamation of the blockade by the President; but the necessities of the Confederacy and the hope of enormous profits by enterprising English adventurers formed together so powerful a stimulus to blockade running that, as a matter of course, it at once assumed a considerable development, and for a time actually increased in proportion to the means taken to suppress it. The Confederates had little use for their cotton, except as a medium of exchange; it therefore fell to a lower price than usual in the South; while the dearth of it in England and in the North caused an enormous increase in its value in those countries. The difference between eight cents a pound, at which it could be purchased in Wilmington, and two shillings, at which it could be sold in Liverpool, afforded a profit which would compensate for almost any possible risk. Three successful voyages would pay for a vessel; and the odds against a blockade runner were nothing like so great as that. A single ship, the *R. E. Lee*, ran the blockade twenty-one times between December, 1862, and November, 1863, carrying abroad six thousand bales of cotton. This was a case of extraordinary success, but it was

Soley, "The Blockade and the Cruisers," p. 156.

CHAP. III.

the opinion of our naval officers that two-thirds of the vessels attempting to enter Wilmington during the first half of 1864 were successful. It is true that sixty steamers running the blockade were captured or destroyed by the squadron before Wilmington; but in many cases these had more than paid for themselves before their fate overtook them.

Soley, "The Blockade and the Cruisers," p. 94.

And yet the blockade was one of the most effective ever seen in war. Captures to the amount of many millions of dollars were made, and the shore was strewn with the wrecks of ships which were destroyed in the attempt to escape. In the latter part of 1864 the blockade was greatly increased in stringency. Three cordons of ships were drawn about the blockaded ports; the first as close as it could lie to the shore, and the third one hundred and thirty miles from land. Even through all these toils the long, narrow, and swift steel cruisers sometimes made their way. But the proportion of those which were captured grew so large that the industry languished. The most prudent had retired with their gains, and the business was no longer what it had been. The Government of the United States might have been satisfied with the results of the blockade but for its tremendous expense. To watch the port of Wilmington required a vast armada; and it was for this reason, fully as much as to put a stop to contraband trade, that the Navy Department and the President constantly urged upon the military authorities a joint expedition of the army and navy against Fort Fisher.

Mr. Welles had from time to time during the war tried to effect this purpose, but it was not until the autumn of 1864 that he could get the promise of a

military force to assist the naval attack. He at once took measures to make ready as great a force as possible and offered the command of it to Admiral Farragut. His health, which had been seriously impaired by his incessant exertions and exposures in the Gulf, compelled that energetic officer to decline this appointment; it was then given to Rear-Admiral D. D. Porter, who had greatly distinguished himself by his zeal and ability in command of the Mississippi squadron. "A fleet of naval vessels," says Mr. Welles, "surpassing in numbers and equipments any which had assembled during the war, was collected with dispatch at Hampton Roads." General Grant promised an expeditionary force of over six thousand men.

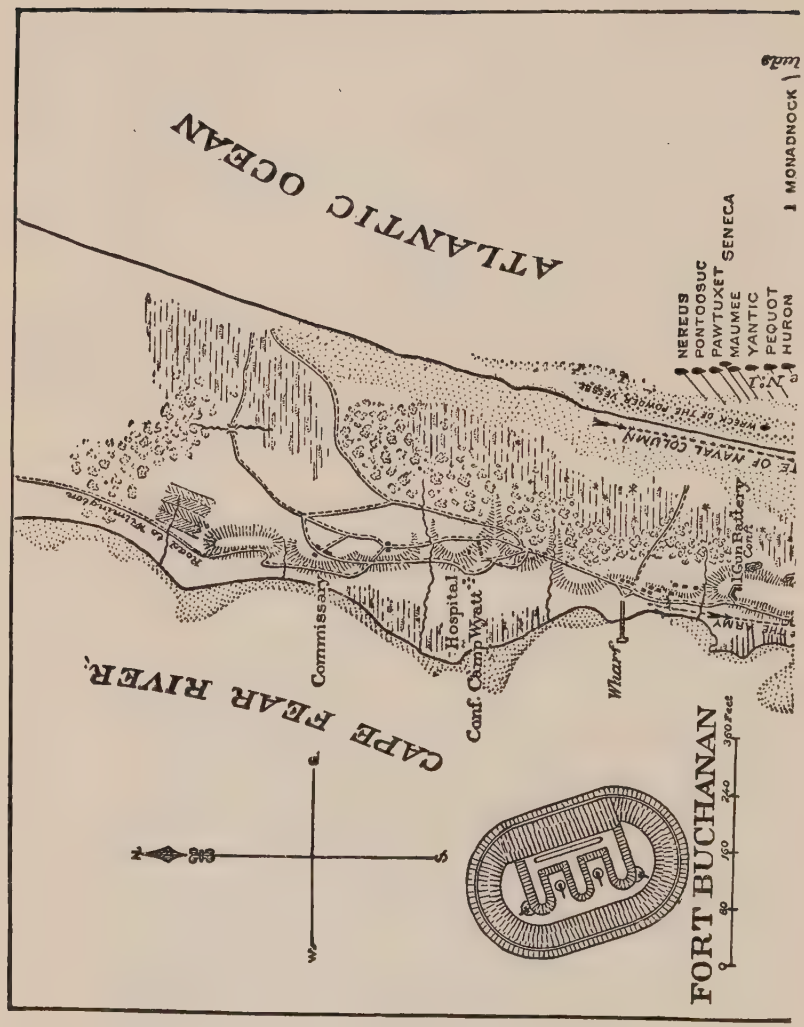
CHAP. III.

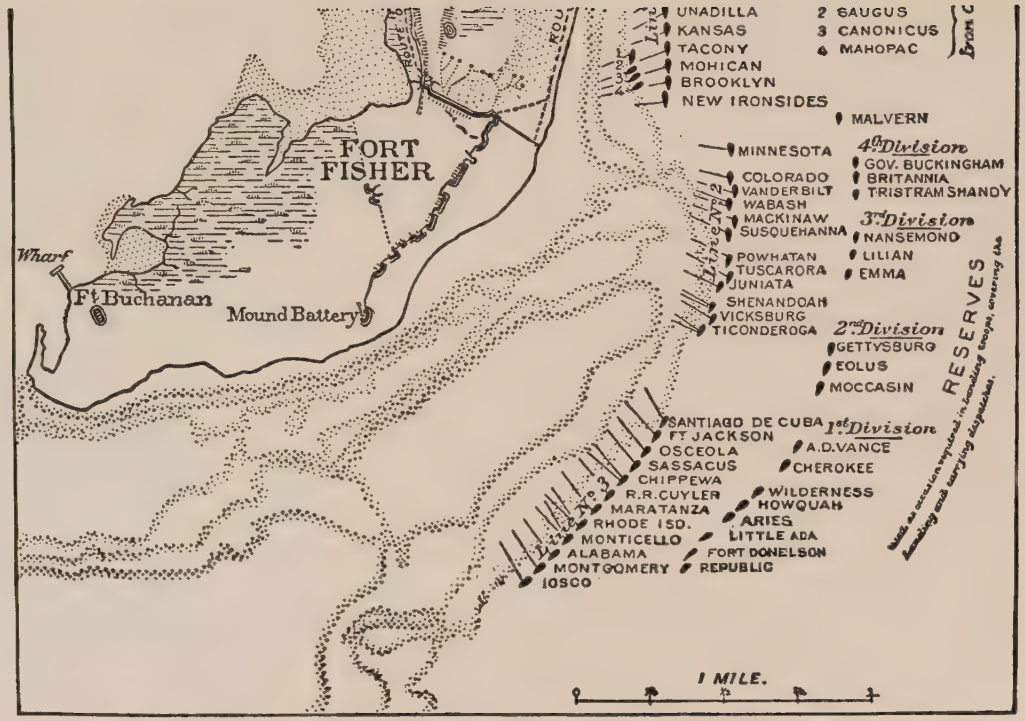
Welles to Farragut, Sept. 5, 1864.

Report Secretary of the Navy, 1865, p. iv.

It was the wish of the President and the War Department that General Gillmore should have command of these troops; but that brave and capable officer had fallen under General Grant's displeasure, and he had substituted General Godfrey Weitzel. Being informed of the plan proposed Weitzel went down to New Inlet in the last days of September, and with the assistance of Rear-Admiral S. P. Lee made a thorough reconnaissance of the place. He found Fort Fisher a most formidable work. The Confederates had made the best use of the long leisure afforded them, and had built an imposing fortress on the narrow sandspit which runs northward from New Inlet between Cape Fear River and the sea. A small outwork called Fort Buchanan was built on the shore of the Inlet. A half mile to the north Fort Fisher stretched all the way across the narrow peninsula, at that point only about five hundred yards wide.

1864.


ATLANTIC OCEAN
CAPE FEAR RIVER.
NEREUS
PONTOOSUC
PAWTUXET
SENECA
MAUMEE
YANTIC
PEQUOT
HURON
MONADNOCK
Commissary
Hospital
Camp Watt
Wharf
Gun Battery
FORT BUCHANAN
40
160
240
360 Feet



MAP OF THE NAVAL AND MILITARY ATTACKS ON FORT FISHER, JANUARY 15, 1865, SHOWING DIRECTION OF FIRE OF UNION VESSELS.

NOTE: The flag-ship *Malvern* (placed on the map behind the *New Ironsides)* had no fixed position.

CHAP. III. The land face looked north; the sea face east, running along the beach for thirteen hundred yards. The northern front mounted twenty-one guns and three mortars, the sea front twenty-four. The work was so extensive that if it had consisted of its vast parapet alone it would have protected only those immediately under the wall. They had therefore built an extraordinary series of traverses, made bomb-proof; so that Fort Fisher really consisted of something like a dozen small forts in one inclosure.

Report Committee on the Conduct of the War, 1864–65. Part II., p. 68.

Weitzel returned and reported the result of his observations to Grant, who told him he did not think he would start the expedition; that the navy had advertised it too widely by rendezvousing the fleet at Hampton Roads — a charge which seems hardly reasonable, as the fleet could not sail without a rendezvous. The plan lay in abeyance for several weeks. It was taken up with renewed spirit on account of an idea conceived by General Butler, suggested by reading of the great destruction consequent upon an explosion of gunpowder at Erith, England. He supposed that firing a large mass of powder some four hundred yards from Fort Fisher would for the moment paralyze the garrison, and so injure the work as to render its capture easy. This plan, after it had been tried and failed, seemed very ridiculous, and every one concerned in the affair, except Butler, made haste to disavow all responsibility for it. But no one thought it ridiculous when it was suggested. General Butler says: "It was readily embraced by the Secretary of the Navy, and with more caution by the President." After a thorough study of the subject by accom-

Ibid., p. 4.

plished officers of the army and navy it was decided that the experiment was worth trying; the *Louisiana*, a boat of little value, was selected and fitted out, and loaded with two hundred and thirty-five tons of powder. CHAP. III.

It was then the first week in December; Sherman was approaching Savannah, and General Grant, in view of the weakening of the garrison of Wilmington by the detachment of troops to meet the victors of Atlanta, was anxious for the expedition to be off. He afterwards said that he had never dreamed of General Butler's going with it; that he had given his orders to Weitzel through Butler, his department commander, as required by military courtesy, without any thought of his going in person. Butler contradicted this statement, insisting that his purpose was known to Grant from the beginning. However this may be, the expedition started under the worst possible auspices. Weitzel, who had been selected to command it, never read his orders, which had been communicated by Grant to Butler, and not shown to Weitzel. In these orders Grant had said: "The object of the expedition will be gained on effecting a landing on the mainland between Cape Fear River and the Atlantic, north of the north entrance to the river. Should such landing be effected, whether the enemy hold Fort Fisher or the batteries guarding the entrance to the river there, the troops should intrench themselves, and by coöperating with the navy effect the reduction and capture of those places." It was an oversight almost incredible that General Butler did not say a word to Weitzel of these clear and important in-

1864.

Report Committee on Conduct of the War, 1864-65. Part II., p. 52.

Ibid., pp. 10, 11.

Grant to Butler, Dec. 6, 1864. Ibid., p. 10.

CHAP. III.

structions. To make a bad matter worse neither Butler nor Weitzel was on good terms with Admiral Porter, who was to command the fleet.

The history of this unfortunate expedition, as written by the principal participators, is little more than a series of mutual recriminations. The fleet sailed from Hampton Roads on the 13th of December, and the transports with six thousand five hundred troops on the next day. From the lack of a good understanding, so essential in such cases, they did not arrive together at the rendezvous. Butler went at once to New Inlet, but Admiral Porter put in at Beaufort to "coal and receive ammunition," as he says, "for now that the expedition had waited two months there was no particular hurry." When the admiral was ready to go in and explode the powder boat, on the 18th, Butler suggested delay until the sea, which had grown rough, should subside. A gale came on which lasted several days, and which the fleet at anchor rode out in the most creditable manner. When the storm abated Porter again informed Butler, who in his turn had gone to Beaufort for coal and water, that the powder boat would be exploded on the night of the 23d of December. Admiral Porter seems up to this time to have expected a great effect from the explosion. He suggested to Butler that even at a distance of 25 miles the explosion might affect the boilers of his steamers; and in another letter he says, "The powder vessel is as complete as human ingenuity can make her."

1864.

D. D. Porter, "Naval History of the Civil War," p. 693.

Report Committee on Conduct of the War, 1864–65. Part II., p. 18.

She was towed to her place near the beach, four hundred yards from the fort, by the *Wilderness*, under the charge of two of the bravest and most ac-

complished officers of the navy, Commander Alex. C. Rhind and Lieutenant S. W. Preston, both of them volunteers. Every contingency was provided for; it was even arranged between those two devoted sailors that if she were boarded by the enemy and in danger of capture, Preston, at a signal given by Rhind, was to stick a lighted candle into a bag of powder. All this devotion, however, was to go for nothing; there is even a touch of the comic about this daring deed of two of the most heroic men our navy has known. They lighted their fuses, and kindled a fire of pine knots in the cabin of the *Louisiana*, and then jumped into their boats and pulled for the *Wilderness*. The fuses were set for an hour and a half; the *Wilderness* steamed out to sea. The whole fleet waited with breathless apprehension for the result. The explosion took place at forty-five minutes past one; there was a blaze on the horizon, a dull detonation, and nothing more. There was little or no concussion felt on ship or shore. It was General Butler's opinion that the ignition was imperfect; in fact, that not more than one-tenth of the powder was burned.

CHAP. III. Dec., 1864.

At daylight, the admiral got his fleet under way and stood in towards the fort in line of battle. He attacked in fine style and soon silenced the guns of the fortress, to all appearance; though, as it turned out, little damage was done. At evening General Butler arrived with some of the transports, but as it was too late to land the fleet retired to a safe anchorage. The next day was Christmas; the transports were all on hand, and under cover of the guns of the fleet, which kept up an annoying

CHAP. III. fire all the morning, the troops began to land about five miles north of the fort. Weitzel took the first five hundred as a reconnoitering party and pushed
Dec. 25, 1864. rapidly towards the fort, capturing on the way the small garrison of an outlying earthwork. On questioning the prisoners, he found they belonged to Hoke's division, which he had left at Richmond; and that the rest of the brigade to which they belonged was a mile and a half to the rear. This convinced him that the garrison of Fort Fisher had been newly strengthened, and this impression was deepened by the fact that the next squad he captured said they were outside the fort because the bomb-proofs were full. This was not encouraging information, but he pushed on, advancing his skirmish line to within 150 yards of the fort, and from a knoll had a good view of the interior of the work. What he saw powerfully impressed him; the fort was practically uninjured, and seemed to him, with its thick parapets, its bastions in high relief, its bomb-proof traverses, the strongest work he had seen during the war. Weitzel was a brave and intelligent soldier, but he had been engaged in five assaults of intrenchments, three times attacking, twice defending the works. On all five occasions, the party attacking was repulsed; and Weitzel decided naturally enough that he would not advise an attack upon a work stronger than any he had ever attacked in vain or defended successfully.

Weitzel, Testimony. Report Committee on Conduct of the War, 1864–65. Part II., pp. 72, 73.

Weitzel reported to Butler the result of his reconnaissance, which was confirmed by General C. B. Comstock of Grant's staff, who had also reconnoitered the work. Upon this report, General Butler

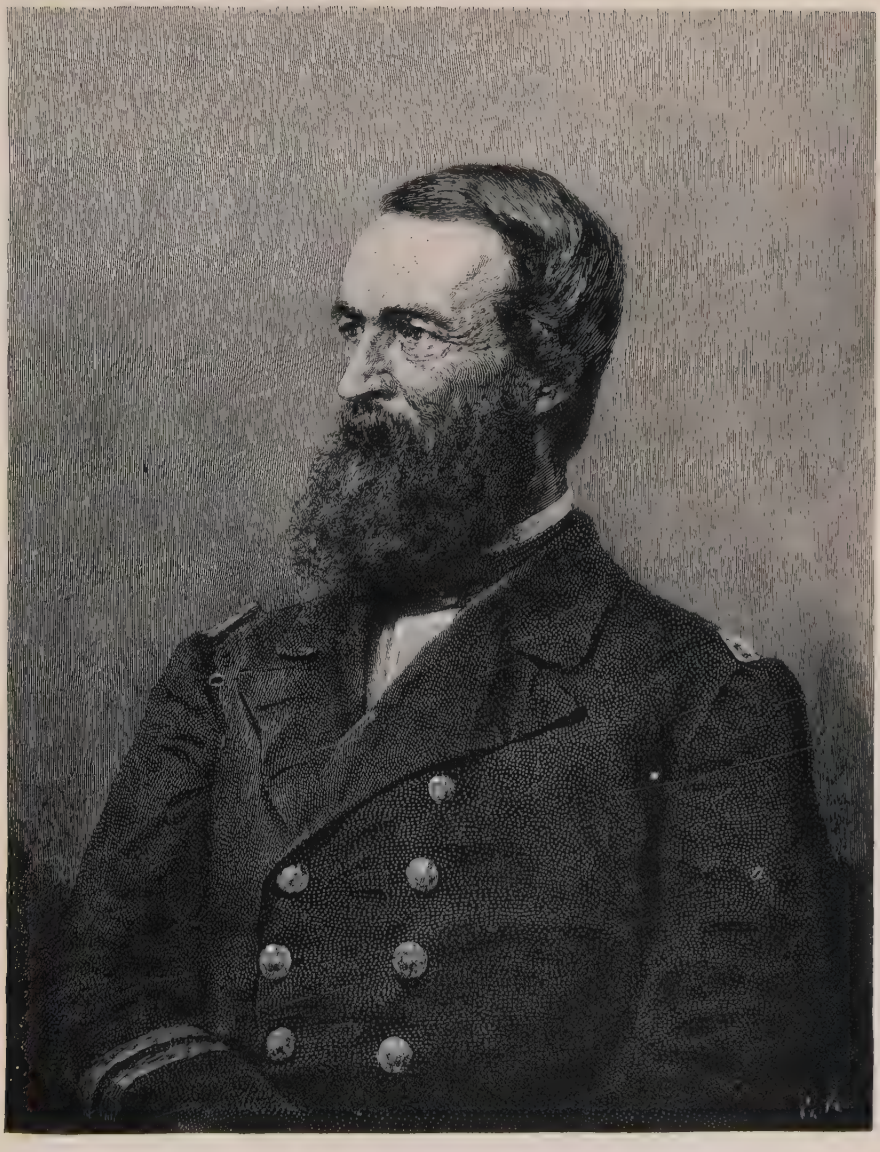
made the capital mistake of the expedition. Grant's orders were clear and explicit; the landing itself was to be regarded as a success; if the work did not fall at once, the troops were to stay there and intrench themselves, and, with the help of the navy, reduce and capture the place. General Butler chose to assume that he had not effected a landing, because all of his troops had not yet got ashore; the weather began to look unfavorable; he therefore resolved to abandon the enterprise and return to Fort Monroe. Even then he did not show his orders to Weitzel, who said afterwards that if he had known of their existence he would have advised differently.

Report Committee on Conduct of the War, 1864–65. Part II., p. 80.

While the generals afloat were coming to this unfortunate conclusion, one of the officers ashore had made up his mind in the opposite sense. General N. M. Curtis, a man of unusual physical strength, courage, and energy, had pushed his advance almost to the parapet of the fort. The fire of the navy had been so severe as to confine the garrison in great part to the bomb-proof, so that Curtis's men were hardly molested in their approach. They came so near that they captured a mounted courier; one man climbed the parapet and brought away a flag which had been shot away. Curtis was burning with eagerness to assault; his men shared his enthusiasm. Of course it cannot be said whether he would have succeeded or not, though his spirit so infected General Comstock that he changed his mind, and now believed the movement practicable. But the orders were given to reëmbark, and slowly and reluctantly Curtis drew away his men from the coveted prize

CHAP. III. he believed was in his hands. The reëmbarkation of the 2500 who had landed took as much time as would have been required to put the whole force on shore. The weather grew worse the next day, and a portion of Curtis's brigade remained on shore until the 27th without molestation by the Confederates.

On the evening of that day General Butler arrived at Fort Monroe and sent a brief telegram to General Grant announcing his return and the failure of the expedition. On the 3d of January he made a more detailed report, throwing the blame of the failure upon Admiral Porter, saying that the first delay of three days of good weather, was due to the navy not being on hand when the army arrived; that the powder boat was prematurely exploded; that Porter should have run by the fort and thus blockaded Wilmington; that Hoke's division was in front of him, making the enemy's force greater than his own; that the experience of Port Hudson and Fort Wagner convinced him that so strong a work as Fisher could not be taken by assault. Upon this General Grant made a merciless indorsement to the effect that he had never intended that Butler should go with the expedition, and that he was in error in stating that he came back in "obedience to his instructions." Grant immediately relieved General Butler from command, which closed his military career. He was summoned before the Committee on the Conduct of the War a few days later, and defended himself with his usual vigor and adroitness, and the Committee in their report, after hearing Grant and Porter, fully justified the action of Butler.



ADMIRAL DAVID D. PORTER.

CHAP. III.

The President was deeply disappointed by the untoward result of the expedition. Finding that Admiral Porter and the Navy Department were still confident that an attack, if properly made, would succeed, without losing a moment of time in regrets and without even waiting for the official reports of the affair, he directed that Admiral Porter should hold his position off Fort Fisher and that the Secretary of the Navy should send in his name a telegram to General Grant inviting him to a renewed coöperation in attacking the fort. To this Grant instantly acceded. He sent back the same force which had gone before, Adelbert Ames's and Charles J. Paine's divisions, adding Joseph C. Abbott's brigade of the Twenty-fourth Corps, and assigned to command the expedition General Alfred H. Terry.

Welles to Grant, Dec. 29, 1864. Report of Secretary of the Navy, 1865, p. 71.

A landing was effected on the 13th of January. In this case there was no room for doubt or vacillation. The failure of Butler was a sufficient education for Terry. He knew he was sent there to take the fort. He proceeded with the greatest energy and singleness of purpose to do this. His first work was to draw a strong line of contravallation across the narrow sandspit about two miles north of the fort to protect his rear against any attack from Wilmington; this was completed by a hard night's work; at eight in the morning Terry's foothold on the peninsula was secured; Paine and Abbott were placed in this line. Under cover of the fire of the fleet, which now worked with splendid zeal and activity under the stimulus of the hope and gratification occasioned by the return of the army, Ames's division, with Curtis in the lead, moved

1865.

Terry, Report, Jan. 25, 1865

CHAP. III. down the river to within six hundred yards of the fort, where Terry, Curtis, and Comstock made a careful reconnaissance. Curtis felt himself at home on this ground; he was as ready as ever to assault, and an attack was arranged for the afternoon of

Jan., 1865. the 15th. Ames was to move on the land face with his division, and the navy, inspired by a noble emulation, undertook to attack the bastion at the sea-angle at the same time. In the morning

Col. William Lamb, in "Southern Historical Society Papers," Vol. X., p. 356. Porter began and carried on perhaps the most tremendous fire to which a fort has ever been subjected from a fleet. Nothing could withstand the rain of projectiles which he poured upon Fort Fisher. At first the Confederate cannoneers stood stoutly enough to their guns, while the infantry huddled in their bomb-proofs; but the fire was too hot for human endurance; one by one the guns of the fort were dismounted or destroyed, until hardly a response came from the parapets to the thunder of the ships.

Jan. 15, 1865. At two o'clock Curtis began to move forward against the land face of the fort; Galusha Pennypacker and Louis Bell following in close support. They went forward rapidly, availing themselves of every inequality of the ground, under a severe fire of musketry, until being near enough for the final rush the fleet was signaled to change the direction of its fire, and Curtis led his brigade directly at the bastion by the river. At the same instant the naval force gallantly led by Commander K. R. Breese attempted to storm the bastion on the sea beach. This attempt failed, with the loss of many brave men; notably of Lieutenants S. W. Preston and B. H. Porter, two of the most brilliant and

promising officers in the service; but the diversion thus made was of great advantage to Curtis in distracting the attention of the garrison at a critical moment. The irresistible rush of his brigade carried them over the parapet and Pennypacker gained the palisade from the earthwork to the river. They were both now inside the works and ready to take them in reverse; but here they found that their labor was only begun. The system of traverses was so complete that it required nearly a dozen separate actions to carry the fort. The garrison under Colonel William Lamb, an officer of high bravery and intelligence, fought with desperate courage; but the progress of the National soldiers, though slow and hotly disputed, was never once checked. The routed sailors and marines took charge of the line in the rear and Abbott was set free to reënforce the storming party in the traverses. It was growing dark when the last rush was made which cleared the fort. It was a well-won victory, not lightly gained. Curtis was terribly wounded in the head; Pennypacker had a severe wound, the gallant Bell was killed at the head of his brigade. The garrison fled to Fort Buchanan at the southern extremity of Federal Point, where late in the evening they surrendered. Colonel Lamb and General W. H. C. Whiting, the latter having taken part in the action, though not in command, both severely wounded, were taken prisoners.

CHAP. III.

Jan. 15, 1865.

Terry, Report. "Rebellion Record." Vol. XI., p. 429.

Ibid.

The forts at the mouth of the river were immediately abandoned, rendering the victory complete and extremely valuable. One hundred and sixty-nine cannon in all were captured, and more than

CHAP. III. two thousand prisoners. But, better than all this, the fleet could now enter the harbor, and the days of blockade running were at an end. A comical afterpiece—here, as at Savannah—followed the great drama. Two English vessels after the fort had been taken made their way by night through the fleet and gave the customary signals, which were answered satisfactorily by General Terry, under the dictation of an intelligent negro; the vessels came in, their officers reported, and were informed that their ships were prizes.

Jan. 14, 1865. On the day that Terry was preparing to storm Fort Fisher General Schofield received his orders from Grant to move the Twenty-third Corps to the east. He came as rapidly as possible by river and by rail to Washington, and reporting in person to Grant at Fort Monroe went with him to Fort Fisher, where, with Terry and Porter, the plan of the coming campaign was arranged. Schofield was placed in command of the new department of North Carolina, and the first task assigned to him was the capture of Wilmington, to serve as a base for Sherman if anything should interrupt his march to Goldsboro'; and next, to open the route from New Berne to Goldsboro', and concentrate his army there to meet Sherman and be ready for any duty which the exigencies of the campaign might require.

Schofield, Report, Apr. 3, 1865.

Feb. 9, 1865. The first division of the Western troops that arrived was that of General J. D. Cox, followed a few days later by part of D. N. Couch's; and with these and Terry's force Schofield moved on Wilmington. The Confederate general Hoke had intrenched himself with his own and what was left of Whi-

Ibid.

ting's troops across Federal Point, on a line from Myrtle Sound to Cape Fear River, and beyond the river a heavy earthwork called Fort Anderson guarded the right bank. Cox and Ames marched against this position on the 17th, by the right bank of the stream; Terry moved up the left bank, a strong force of gunboats between them; Schofield kept his headquarters on a steamboat. The fort was attacked by the fleet at long range; and two of Cox's brigades demonstrated against it, while the rest of his force made a detour to the west to come in upon its rear. Thus threatened from every side the Confederate garrison evacuated the place, abandoning ten pieces of heavy ordnance and retreating to Town Creek, half way to Wilmington, halted in a strong position well covered by swamps. CHAP. III. Feb. 19, 1865.

Ames, with his division, went back to the left bank, where Hoke's principal force was opposing Terry. Cox cleverly turned the Confederate position at Town Creek, and, coming in upon their rear, dislodged and routed them, capturing two guns and nearly four hundred prisoners; the rest of them made their escape to Wilmington. Cox pushed on with great energy the next day and came opposite to the city, which was shrouded in smoke, and gave other signs of evacuation. Terry had been stoutly resisted by Hoke — who was covering his purpose of retreat by this judicious action — and Schofield had ordered Cox to cross the river and join the army on the left bank; but Cox, seeing that Wilmington was in extremity, took the responsibility of disobeying his orders and explaining the situation to Schofield. His conduct was approved, and at daybreak on the 22d of February Schofield cele- 1865.

CHAP. III. brated the birthday of Washington by an unopposed entry into Wilmington.

Schofield, Report, "Rebellion Record." Vol. XI., p. 383.

The next thing to be done was to gain possession of Goldsboro', the point designated for the junction with Sherman. It was decided that New Berne afforded a better base for that movement, as well as for Sherman's subsequent operations, than Wilmington. Cox was therefore sent to New Berne to prepare it for that purpose, and to set on foot the necessary repairs to the railway between New Berne and Goldsboro'. In the prosecution of this work he advanced to the neighborhood of Kinston, on the Neuse River, about half way to Goldsboro', where, on the morning of the 8th of March, he was attacked with great spirit by the Confederate forces, under General Bragg, consisting of Hoke's command and some of the débris of Hood's army. One of Cox's regiments, in advance of his main line, was routed and captured. The ease with which this success was achieved was most encouraging to Bragg, who came up energetically against Cox's force in position, but was easily repulsed. The attack was renewed the next day with unabated courage, and although the Confederates were again repulsed, General Schofield, who had arrived on the field, sent urgent orders to Couch to hasten his march across country from Wilmington. Before he arrived, Bragg had retired through Goldsboro' to concentrate with the rest of Johnston's force, who were preparing to resist Sherman's northward march. Schofield occupied Kinston on the 14th, bridged the Neuse, and opened up communication with New Berne by river. Terry, marching directly upon Goldsboro' from Wilming-

Cox, "The March to the Sea," p. 159.

March, 1865.

ton, secured the crossing of the Neuse south of that city, which Schofield occupied on the 21st of March, and made ready for the reception of Sherman; who, on the 23d, here completed his march through the Carolinas.

CHAPTER IV

THE THIRTEENTH AMENDMENT

CHAP. IV. WE have enumerated with some detail the series of radical antislavery measures enacted at the second session of the Thirty-seventh Congress, which ended July 17, 1862 — the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia; the prohibition of slavery in the National Territories; the practical repeal of the fugitive-slave law; and the sweeping measures of confiscation which in different forms decreed forfeiture of slave property for the crimes of treason and rebellion. When this wholesale legislation was supplemented by the President's preliminary Emancipation Proclamation of September 22, 1862, and his final Edict of Freedom of January 1, 1863, the institution had clearly received its *coup de grâce* in all except the loyal border States. Consequently the third session of the Thirty-seventh Congress, ending March 4, 1863, occupied itself with this phase of the slavery question only to the extent of an effort to put into operation the President's plan of compensated abolishment. That effort took practical shape in a bill to give the State of Missouri fifteen millions on condition that she would emancipate her slaves; but the proposition failed, largely through the op-

GENERAL ALFRED H. TERRY.

position of a few conservative Members from Missouri, and the session adjourned without having by its legislation advanced the destruction of slavery. CHAP. IV.

When Congress met again in December, 1863, and organized by the election of Schuyler Colfax of Indiana as Speaker, the whole situation had undergone further change. The Union arms had been triumphant — Gettysburg had been won and Vicksburg had capitulated; Lincoln's Edict of Freedom had become an accepted fact; fifty regiments of negro soldiers carried bayonets in the Union armies; Vallandigham had been beaten for governor in Ohio by a hundred thousand majority; the draft had been successfully enforced in every district of every loyal State in the Union. Under these brightening prospects, military and political, the more progressive spirits in Congress took up anew the suspended battle with slavery which the institution had itself invited by its unprovoked assault on the life of the Government.

The President's reference to the subject in his annual message was very brief: "The movements by State action for emancipation in several of the States not included in the Emancipation Proclamation are matters of profound gratulation. And while I do not repeat in detail what I have heretofore so earnestly urged upon this subject, my general views and feelings remain unchanged; and I trust that Congress will omit no fair opportunity of aiding these important steps to a great consummation." His language had reference to Maryland, where during the autumn of 1863 the question of emancipation had been actively discussed by political parties, and where at the election of November

Annual Message, Dec. 8, 1863.

CHAP. IV.

4, 1863, a legislature had been chosen containing a considerable majority pledged to emancipation.

More especially did it refer to Missouri, where, notwithstanding the failure of the fifteen-million compensation bill at the previous session, a State Convention had actually passed an ordinance of emancipation, though with such limitations as rendered it unacceptable to the more advanced public opinion of the State. Prudence was the very essence of Mr. Lincoln's statesmanship, and he doubtless felt it was not safe for the Executive to venture farther at that time. "We are like whalers," he said to Governor Morgan one day, "who have been long on a chase: we have at last got the harpoon into the monster, but we must now look how we steer, or with one 'flop' of his tail he will send us all into eternity."

Carpenter, in Raymond, "Life of Abraham Lincoln," p. 752.

Senators and Members of the House, especially those representing antislavery States or districts, did not need to be so circumspect. It was doubtless with this consciousness that J. M. Ashley, a Republican Representative from Ohio, and James F. Wilson, a Republican Representative from Iowa, on the 14th of December, 1863,—that being the earliest opportunity after the House was organized,—introduced the former a bill and the latter a joint resolution to propose to the several States an amendment of the Constitution prohibiting slavery throughout the United States. Both the propositions were referred to the committee on the judiciary, of which Mr. Wilson was chairman; but before he made any report on the subject it had been brought before the Senate, where its discussion attracted marked public attention.

"Globe," Dec. 14, 1863, pp. 19, 21.

Senator John B. Henderson, who with rare courage and skill had, as a progressive Conservative, made himself one of the leading champions of Missouri emancipation, on the 11th of January, 1864, introduced into the Senate a Joint Resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution that slavery shall not exist in the United States. It is not probable that either he or the Senate saw any near hope of success in such a measure. The resolution went to the committee on the judiciary, apparently without being treated as a matter of pressing importance. Nearly a month had elapsed when Mr. Sumner also introduced a Joint Resolution, proposing an amendment that "everywhere within the limits of the United States, and of each State or Territory thereof, all persons are equal before the law, so that no person can hold another as a slave." He asked its reference to the select committee on slavery, of which he was chairman; but several Senators argued that such an amendment properly belonged to the committee on the judiciary, and in this reference Mr. Sumner finally acquiesced. It is possible that this slight and courteously worded rivalry between the two committees induced earlier action than would otherwise have happened, for two days later Lyman Trumbull, chairman of the judiciary committee, reported back a substitute in the following language, differing from the phraseology of both Mr. Sumner and Mr. Henderson:

Henry Wilson, "History of the Anti-slavery Measures in Congress," p. 251.

"Globe," Feb. 8, 1864, p. 521.

Feb. 10.

ARTICLE XIII.

SECTION 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime, whereof the party shall

CHAP. IV. have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

"Globe," Mar. 28, 1864, p. 1313. SECTION 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Even after the committee on the judiciary by this report had adopted the measure, it was evidently thought to be merely in an experimental stage, for more than six weeks elapsed before the Senate again took it up for action. On the 28th of March, however, Mr. Trumbull formally opened debate upon it in an elaborate speech. The discussion was continued from time to time until the 8th of April. As the Republicans had almost unanimous control of the Senate, their speeches, though able and eloquent, seemed perfunctory and devoted to a foregone conclusion. Those which attracted most attention were the arguments of Reverdy Johnson of Maryland and Mr. Henderson of Missouri,— Senators representing slave States,— advocating the amendment. Senator Sumner, whose pride of erudition amounted almost to vanity, pleaded earnestly for his phrase, "All persons are equal before the law," copied from the Constitution of revolutionary France. But Jacob M. Howard of Michigan, one of the soundest lawyers and clearest thinkers of the Senate, pointed out the inapplicability of the words, and declared it safer to follow the Ordinance of 1787, with its historical associations and its well adjudicated meaning.

There was, of course, from the first no doubt whatever that the Senate would pass the constitutional amendment, the political classification of that body being thirty-six Republicans, five Conditional Unionists, and nine Democrats. Not only

was the whole Republican strength, thirty-six votes, cast in its favor, but two Democrats,— Reverdy Johnson of Maryland and James W. Nesmith of Oregon,— with a political wisdom far in advance of their party, also voted for it, giving more than the two-thirds required by the Constitution.

When, however, the Joint Resolution went to the House of Representatives there was such a formidable party strength arrayed against it as to foreshadow its failure. The party classification of the House stood one hundred and two Republicans, seventy-five Democrats, and nine from the border States, leaving but little chance of obtaining the required two-thirds vote in favor of the measure. Nevertheless there was sufficient Republican strength to secure its discussion; and when it came up on the 31st of May the first vote showed seventy-six to fifty-five against rejecting the Joint Resolution.

"Globe," May 31, 1864, p. 2612.

We may infer that the conviction of the present hopelessness of the measure greatly shortened the debate upon it. The question occupied the House only on three different days — the 31st of May, when it was taken up, and the 14th and 15th of June. The speeches in opposition all came from Democrats; the speeches in its favor all came from Republicans, except one. From its adoption the former predicted the direst evils to the Constitution and the Republic; the latter the most beneficial results in the restoration of the country to peace and the fulfillment of the high destiny intended for it by its founders. Upon the final question of its passage the vote stood: yeas, ninety-three; nays, sixty-five; absent or not voting,

1864.

CHAP. IV.

twenty-three. Of those voting in favor of the Resolution eighty-seven were Republicans and four were Democrats.[1] Those voting against it were all Democrats. The resolution, not having secured a two-thirds vote, was thus lost; seeing which Mr. Ashley, Republican, who had the measure in charge, changed his vote so that he might, if occasion arose, move its reconsideration.

"Globe," June 15, 1864, p. 2995.

The ever-vigilant public opinion of the loyal States, intensified by the burdens and anxieties of the war, took up this far-reaching question of abolishing slavery by constitutional amendment with an interest fully as deep as that manifested by Congress. Before the Joint Resolution had failed in the House of Representatives the issue was already transferred to discussion and prospective decision in a new forum.

When on the 7th of June, 1864, the National Republican Convention met in Baltimore, the two most vital thoughts which animated its members were the renomination of Mr. Lincoln and the success of the constitutional amendment. The first was recognized as a popular decision needing only the formality of an announcement by the Convention; and the full emphasis of speech and resolution was therefore centered on the latter, as the dominant and aggressive reform upon which the party would stake its political fortunes in the coming campaign.

It is not among the least of the evidences of President Lincoln's political sagacity and political courage

[1] The Democrats voting for the Joint Resolution were Moses F. Odell and John A. Griswold of New York, Joseph Baily of Pennsylvania, and Ezra Wheeler of Wisconsin, the latter having made the only speech in its favor from the Democratic side.

that it was he himself who supplied the spark that fired this train of popular action. The editor of the "New York Independent," who attended the Convention, and who with others visited Mr. Lincoln immediately after the nomination, printed the following in his paper of June 16, 1864: "When one of us mentioned the great enthusiasm at the Convention, after Senator E. D. Morgan's proposition to amend the Constitution, abolishing slavery, Mr. Lincoln instantly said, 'It was I who suggested to Mr. Morgan that he should put that idea into his opening speech.'"[1]

The declaration of Morgan, who was chairman of the National Republican Committee, and as such called the Convention to order, immediately found an echo in the speech of the temporary chairman, the Rev. Dr. Robert J. Breckinridge. The indorsement of the principle by the eminent Kentucky divine, not on the ground of party but on the high philosophy of true universal government and of genuine Christian religion, gave the announcement an interest and significance accorded to few planks in party platforms. The permanent chairman,

[1] William Lloyd Garrison, in a speech at a meeting in the Boston Music Hall on February 4, 1865, called to rejoice over the passage of the XIIIth Amendment, bore the following testimony to the President's initiative:

"And to whom is the country more immediately indebted for this vital and saving amendment of the Constitution than, perhaps, to any other man? I believe I may confidently answer — to the humble railsplitter of Illinois — to the Presidential chainbreaker for millions of the oppressed — to Abraham Lincoln! (Immense and long continued applause, ending with three cheers for the President.) I understand that it was by his wish and influence that that plank was made a part of the Baltimore platform; and taking his position unflinchingly upon that platform, the people have overwhelmingly sustained both him and it, in ushering in the year of jubilee." — "The Liberator," February 10, 1865.

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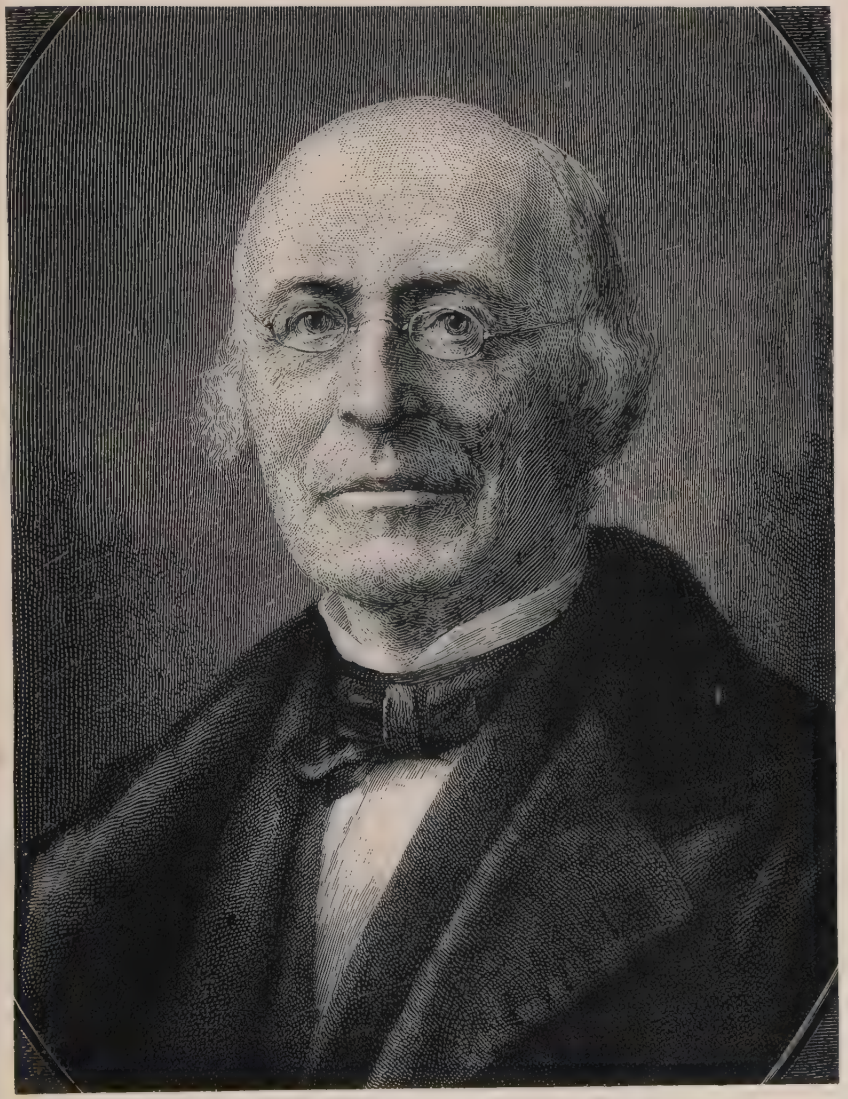
William Dennison, reaffirmed the doctrine of Morgan and Breckinridge, and the thunderous applause of the whole Convention greeted the formal proclamation of the new dogma of political faith in the third resolution of the platform:

> *Resolved*, That as slavery was the cause and now constitutes the strength of this rebellion, and as it must be always and everywhere hostile to the principles of republican government, justice and the National safety demand its utter and complete extirpation from the soil of the Republic; and that while we uphold and maintain the acts and proclamations by which the Government in its own defense has aimed a death blow at this gigantic evil, we are in favor, furthermore, of such an amendment to the Constitution, to be made by the people, in conformity with its provisions, as shall terminate and forever prohibit the existence of slavery within the limits or the jurisdiction of the United States.

We have related elsewhere how upon this and the other declarations of the platform the Republican party went to battle and gained an overwhelming victory — a popular majority of 411,281, an electoral majority of 191, and a House of Representatives of 138 Unionists to 35 Democrats. In view of this result the President was able to take up the question with confidence among his official recommendations; and in the annual message which he transmitted to Congress on the 6th of December, 1864, he urged upon the Members whose terms were about to expire the propriety of at once carrying into effect the clearly expressed popular will. Said he:

"Tribune Almanac," 1865. p. 20.

> At the last session of Congress a proposed amendment of the Constitution, abolishing slavery throughout the United States, passed the Senate, but failed, for lack of the requisite two-thirds vote, in the House of Representa-



WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.

tives. Although the present is the same Congress, and nearly the same members, and without questioning the wisdom or patriotism of those who stood in opposition, I venture to recommend the reconsideration and passage of the measure at the present session. Of course the abstract question is not changed, but an intervening election shows, almost certainly, that the next Congress will pass the measure if this does not. Hence there is only a question of *time* as to when the proposed amendment will go to the States for their action. And as it is to so go at all events, may we not agree that the sooner the better? It is not claimed that the election has imposed a duty on Members to change their views or their votes any further than, as an additional element to be considered, their judgment may be affected by it. It is the voice of the people, now for the first time heard upon the question. In a great National crisis like ours unanimity of action among those seeking a common end is very desirable — almost indispensable. And yet no approach to such unanimity is attainable unless some deference shall be paid to the will of the majority, simply because it is the will of the majority. In this case the common end is the maintenance of the Union; and among the means to secure that end, such will, through the election, is most clearly declared in favor of such constitutional amendment.

Lincoln, Annual Message, Dec. 6, 1864.

On the 15th of December Mr. Ashley gave notice that he would, on the 6th of January, 1865, call up the constitutional amendment for reconsideration; and accordingly, on the day appointed, he opened the new debate upon it in an earnest speech. General discussion followed from time to time, occupying perhaps half the days of the month of January. As at the previous session, the Republicans all favored, while the Democrats mainly opposed it; but the important exceptions among the latter showed what immense gains the proposition had made in popular opinion and in Congressional willingness to recognize and embody it. The logic of

"Globe," Dec. 15, 1864, p. 53.

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Here was a great revolution of ideas, a mighty sweep of sentiment, which could not be explained away by the stale charge of sectional fanaticism, or by alleging technical irregularities of political procedure. Here was a mighty flood of public opinion, overleaping old barriers and rushing into new channels. The Democratic party did not and could not shut its eyes to the accomplished facts. "In my judgment," said William S. Holman of Indiana, "the fate of slavery is sealed. It dies by the rebellious hand of its votaries, untouched by the law. Its fate is determined by the war; by the measures of the war; by the results of the war. These, sir, must determine it, even if the Constitution were amended." He opposed the amendment, he declared, simply because it was unnecessary.

"Globe," Jan. 11, 1865, p. 219.

Though few other Democrats were so frank, all their speeches were weighed down by the same consciousness of a losing fight, a hopeless cause. The Democratic leader of the House, and lately defeated Democratic candidate for Vice-President, George H. Pendleton, opposed the amendment, as he had done at the previous session, by asserting that three-fourths of the States did not possess constitutional power to pass it, this being — if the paradox be excused — at the same time the weakest and the strongest argument: weakest, because the Constitution in terms contradicted the assertion; strongest, because under the circumstances nothing less than unconstitutionality could justify opposition.

But while the Democrats as a party thus persisted in a false attitude, more progressive Members had the courage to take independent and wiser action. Not only did the four Democrats — Moses F. Odell and John A. Griswold of New York, Joseph Baily of Pennsylvania, and Ezra Wheeler of Wisconsin — who supported the amendment at the first session again record their votes in its favor, but they were now joined by thirteen others of their party associates, namely: Augustus C. Baldwin of Michigan; Alexander H. Coffroth and Archibald McAllister of Pennsylvania; James E. English of Connecticut; John Ganson, Anson Herrick, Homer A. Nelson, William Radford, and John B. Steele of New York; Wells A. Hutchins of Ohio; Austin A. King and James S. Rollins of Missouri; and George H. Yeaman of Kentucky; and by their help the favorable two-thirds vote was secured. But special credit for the result must not be accorded to these alone. Even more than of

"Globe," Jan. 31, 1865, p. 531.

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Northern Democrats must be recognized the courage and progressive liberality of Members from the border slave States — one from Delaware, four from Maryland, three from West Virginia, four from Kentucky, and seven from Missouri, whose speeches and votes aided the consummation of the great act; and finally, something is due to those Democrats, eight in number, who were absent without pairs, and thus, perhaps not altogether by accident, reduced somewhat the two-thirds vote necessary to the passage of the Joint Resolution.

Mingled with these influences of a public and moral nature it is not unlikely that others of more selfish interest, operating both for and against the amendment, were not entirely wanting. One, who was a member of the House, writes: "The success of the measure had been considered very doubtful, and depended upon certain negotiations the result of which was not fully assured, and the particulars of which never reached the public." So also one of the President's secretaries wrote on the 18th of January:

George W. Julian, "Political Recollections," p. 250.

> I went to the President this afternoon at the request of Mr. Ashley, on a matter connecting itself with the pending amendment of the Constitution. The Camden and Amboy Railroad interest promised Mr. Ashley that if he would help postpone the Raritan railroad bill over this session they would in return make the New Jersey Democrats help about the amendment, either by their votes or absence. Sumner being the Senate champion of the Raritan bill, Ashley went to him to ask him to drop it for this session. Sumner, however, showed reluctance to adopt Mr. Ashley's suggestion, saying that he hoped the amendment would pass anyhow, etc. Ashley thought he discerned in Sumner's manner two reasons: (1) That if the present Senate resolution were not adopted by the

House, the Senate would send them another in which they would most likely adopt Sumner's own phraseology and thereby gratify his ambition; and (2) that Sumner thinks the defeat of the Camden and Amboy monopoly would establish a principle by legislative enactment which would effectually crush out the last lingering relics of the States rights dogma. Ashley therefore desired the President to send for Sumner, and urge him to be practical and secure the passage of the amendment in the manner suggested by Mr. Ashley. I stated these points to the President, who replied at once: "I can do nothing with Mr. Sumner in these matters. While Mr. Sumner is very cordial with me, he is making his history in an issue with me on this very point. He hopes to succeed in beating the President so as to change this Government from its original form and make it a strong centralized power." Then calling Mr. Ashley into the room, the President said to him, "I think I understand Mr. Sumner; and I think he would be all the more resolute in his persistence on the points which Mr. Nicolay has mentioned to me if he supposed I were at all watching his course on this matter."

J. G. N., "Personal Memoranda." MS.

The issue was decided in the afternoon of the 31st of January, 1865. The scene was one of unusual interest. The galleries were filled to overflowing; the Members watched the proceedings with unconcealed solicitude. "Up to noon," said a contemporaneous formal report, "the pro-slavery party are said to have been confident of defeating the amendment, and, after that time had passed, one of the most earnest advocates of the measure said, ''T is the toss of a copper.'" There were the usual pleas for postponement and for permission to offer amendments or substitutes, but at four o'clock the House came to a final vote, and the roll-call showed, yeas, 119; nays, 56; not voting, 8. Scattering murmurs of applause had followed the announcement of affirmative votes from several of the

Report of Special Committee of the Union League Club of New York. Pamphlet.

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Democratic Members. This was renewed when by direction of the Speaker the clerk called his name and he voted aye. But when the Speaker finally announced, "The constitutional majority of two-thirds having voted in the affirmative, the Joint Resolution is passed," "the announcement" — so continues the official report printed in the "Globe" — "was received by the House and by the spectators with an outburst of enthusiasm. The Members on the Republican side of the House instantly sprung to their feet, and, regardless of parliamentary rules, applauded with cheers and clapping of hands. The example was followed by the male spectators in the galleries, which were crowded to excess, who waved their hats and cheered loud and long, while the ladies, hundreds of whom were present, rose in their seats and waved their handkerchiefs, participating in and adding to the general excitement and intense interest of the scene. This lasted for several minutes." "In honor of this immortal and sublime event," cried Ebon C. Ingersoll of Illinois, "I move that the House do now adjourn," and against the objection of a Maryland Democrat the motion was carried by a yea and nay vote.

"Globe," Jan. 31, 1865, p. 531.

A salute of one hundred guns soon made the occasion the subject of comment and congratulation throughout the city.[1] On the following night

[1] By inadvertence the Joint Resolution proposing the Thirteenth Amendment was sent to the President, who formally signed it on February 1, the day after its passage by the House. Subsequently (February 7) the Senate adopted a resolution declaring that "such approval was unnecessary to give effect to the action of Congress"; Senator Trumbull stating in his explanatory remarks that the Supreme Court of the United States in a case arising in 1798 had decided that "the negative of the President applies

a considerable procession marched with music to the Executive Mansion to carry popular greetings to the President. In response to their calls, Mr. Lincoln appeared at a window and made a brief speech, of which only an abstract report was preserved, but which is nevertheless important as showing the searching analysis of cause and effect which this question had undergone in his mind, the deep interest he felt in, and the far-reaching consequences he attached to the measure and its success.

He supposed the passage through Congress of the constitutional amendment for the abolishment of slavery throughout the United States was the occasion to which he was indebted for the honor of this call. The occasion was one of congratulation to the country and to the whole world. But there is a task yet before us — to go forward and have consummated by the votes of the States that which Congress had so nobly begun yesterday. He had the honor to inform those present that Illinois had already to-day done the work. Maryland was about half through, but he felt proud that Illinois was a little ahead. He thought this measure was a very fitting if not an indispensable adjunct to the winding up of the great difficulty. He wished the reunion of all the States perfected, and so effected as to remove all causes of disturbance in the future; and to attain this end it was necessary that the original disturbing cause should, if possible, be rooted out. He thought all would bear him witness that he had never shrunk from doing all that he could to eradicate slavery, by issuing an Emancipation Proclamation. But that proclamation falls far short of what the amendment will be when fully consummated. A question might be raised whether the proclamation was legally valid. It

only to the ordinary cases of legislation. He has nothing to do with the proposition or adoption of amendments to the Constitution."— "Globe," February 7, 1865, pp. 629, 630. A similar inadvertence occurred when the amendment of 1861 was passed; it was signed by President Buchanan.

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Widely divergent views were expressed by able constitutional lawyers in both branches of Congress as to what, in the anomalous condition of the country, would constitute a valid ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment; some contending that ratification by three-fourths of the loyal States would be sufficient, others that three-fourths of all the States, whether loyal or insurrectionary, would be necessary. We have seen that Mr. Lincoln, in his speech on Louisiana reconstruction, while expressing no opinion against the first proposition, nevertheless declared, with great argumentative force, that the latter "would be unquestioned and unquestionable"; and this view appears to have governed the action of his successor.

As Mr. Lincoln mentioned with just pride in his address, Illinois was the first State to ratify
1865 the amendment, taking her action on February 1, the day after the Joint Resolution was passed by the House of Representatives; and ratification by other States continued in the following order: Rhode Island, February 2, 1865; Michigan, February 2, 1865; Maryland, February 3, 1865; New York, February 3, 1865; West Virginia, February

3, 1865; Maine, February 7, 1865; Kansas, February 7, 1865; Massachusetts, February 8, 1865; Pennsylvania, February 8, 1865; Virginia, February 9, 1865; Ohio, February 10, 1865; Missouri, February 10, 1865; Indiana, February 16, 1865; Nevada, February 16, 1865; Louisiana, February 17, 1865; Minnesota, February 23, 1865; Wisconsin, March 1, 1865; Vermont, March 9, 1865; Tennessee, April 7, 1865; Arkansas, April 20, 1865; Connecticut, May 5, 1865; New Hampshire, July 1, 1865; South Carolina, November 13, 1865; Alabama, December 2, 1865; North Carolina, December 4, 1865; Georgia, December 9, 1865; Oregon, December 11, 1865; California, December 20, 1865; Florida, December 28, 1865; New Jersey, January 23, 1866; Iowa, January 24, 1866; Texas, February 18, 1870.

Without waiting for the ratification by the last six of these States, Mr. Seward, who remained as Secretary of State in the Cabinet of President Johnson, made official proclamation on December 18, 1865, that the Legislatures of twenty-seven States, constituting three-fourths of the thirty-six States of the Union, had ratified the amendment, and that it had become valid as a part of the Constitution of the United States. It needs to be noted that four of the States constituting this number of twenty-seven were Virginia, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Arkansas, whose reconstruction had been effected under the direction and by the authority of President Lincoln.

The profound political transformation which the American Republic had undergone can perhaps best be measured by contrasting for an instant the two constitutional amendments which Congress made

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it the duty of the Lincoln Administration to submit officially to the several States. The first was that offered by Thomas Corwin, chairman of the Committee of Thirty-three, in February, 1861, and passed by the House of Representatives, yeas, 133; nays, 65; and by the Senate, yeas, 24; nays, 12. It was signed by President Buchanan as one of his last official acts, and accepted and indorsed by Lincoln in his inaugural address. The language of that amendment was:

"No amendment shall be made to the Constitution which will authorize or give to Congress the power to abolish or interfere within any State with the domestic institutions thereof, including that of persons held to labor or service by the laws of said State."

Appendix, "Globe," Mar. 2, 1861, p. 350.

Between Lincoln's inauguration and the outbreak of war, the Department of State, under Seward, transmitted this amendment of 1861 to the several States for their action; and had the South shown a willingness to desist from secession and accept it as a peace offering, there is little doubt that the required three-fourths of the States would have made it a part of the Constitution. But the South refused to halt in her rebellion, and the thunder of Beauregard's guns against Fort Sumter drove away all further thought or possibility of such a ratification; and within four years Congress framed and the same Lincoln Administration sent forth the amendment of 1865, sweeping out of existence by one sentence the institution to which it had in its first proposal offered a virtual claim to perpetual recognition and tolerance. The "new birth of freedom," which Lincoln invoked for the nation in his Gettysburg address, was accomplished.

CHAPTER V

BLAIR'S MEXICAN PROJECT

THE triumphant reëlection of Mr. Lincoln in November, 1864, greatly simplified the political conditions as well as the military prospects of the country. Decisive popular majorities had pointedly rebuked the individuals who proclaimed, and the party which had resolved, that the war was a failure. The verdict of the ballot-box not only decided the continuance of a war administration and a war policy, but renewed the assurance of a public sentiment to sustain its prosecution. When Congress convened on the 6th of December, 1864. and the President transmitted to that body his annual message, he included in his comprehensive review of public affairs a temperate but strong and terse statement of this fact and its potent significance. Inspired by this majestic manifestation of the popular will to preserve the Union and maintain the Constitution, he was able to speak of the future with hope and confidence. But with characteristic prudence and good taste, he uttered no word of boasting and indulged in no syllable of acrimony; on the contrary, in terms of fatherly kindness, he again offered the rebellious States the generous conditions he had previously tendered them by various acts and declarations, and specifi-

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cally in his amnesty proclamation of December 8, 1863. The statement of the whole situation with its alternative issues was so admirably compressed into the closing paragraphs of his message as to leave no room for ignorance or misunderstanding:

Dec. 6, 1864.

The National resources, then, are unexhausted, and, as we believe, inexhaustible. The public purpose to reëstablish and maintain the National authority is unchanged, and, as we believe, unchangeable. The manner of continuing the effort remains to choose. On careful consideration of all the evidence accessible, it seems to me that no attempt at negotiation with the insurgent leader could result in any good. He would accept nothing short of severance of the Union — precisely what we will not and cannot give. His declarations to this effect are explicit and oft-repeated. He does not attempt to deceive us. He affords us no excuse to deceive ourselves. He cannot voluntarily re-accept the Union; we cannot voluntarily yield it. Between him and us the issue is distinct, simple, and inflexible. It is an issue which can only be tried by war, and decided by victory. If we yield, we are beaten; if the Southern people fail him, he is beaten. Either way, it would be the victory and defeat following war.

What is true, however, of him who heads the insurgent cause is not necessarily true of those who follow. Although he cannot re-accept the Union, they can. Some of them, we know, already desire peace and reunion. The number of such may increase. They can, at any moment, have peace simply by laying down their arms, and submitting to the National authority under the Constitution. After so much, the Government could not, if it would, maintain war against them. The loyal people would not sustain or allow it. If questions should remain, we would adjust them by the peaceful means of legislation, conference, courts, and votes, operating only in constitutional and lawful channels. Some certain, and other possible, questions are, and would be, beyond the Executive power to adjust; as, for instance, the admission of members into Congress, and whatever might require the appropriation of money. The Executive power

itself would be greatly diminished by the cessation of actual war. Pardons and remissions of forfeitures, however, would still be within Executive control.

In what spirit and temper this control would be exercised can be fairly judged of by the past. A year ago general pardon and amnesty, upon specified terms, were offered to all, except certain designated classes; and it was, at the same time, made known that the excepted classes were still within contemplation of special clemency. . . . In presenting the abandonment of armed resistance to the national authority, on the part of the insurgents, as the only indispensable condition to ending the war on the part of the Government, I retract nothing heretofore said as to slavery. I repeat the declaration made a year ago, that "While I remain in my present position I shall not attempt to retract or modify the Emancipation Proclamation, nor shall I return to slavery any person who is free by the terms of that proclamation, or by any of the acts of Congress." If the people should, by whatever mode or means, make it an Executive duty to reënslave such persons, another, and not I, must be their instrument to perform it. In stating a single condition of peace, I mean simply to say that the war will cease on the part of the Government whenever it shall have ceased on the part of those who began it.

Annual Message, Dec. 6, 1864.

The country was about to enter upon the fifth year of actual war; but all the indications were pointing unmistakably to a speedy collapse of the rebellion. This foreshadowed disaster to the Confederate armies gave rise to another volunteer peace project and negotiation, which, from the boldness of its animating thought and the official prominence of its actors, assumes a special importance.

The veteran politician, Francis P. Blair, Sr., who, as a young journalist, thirty-five years before, had helped President Jackson throttle the South Carolina nullification; who, from his long political and personal experience at Washington, perhaps

CHAP. V. knew better than almost any one else the individual characters and tempers of Southern leaders; and who, moreover, was ambitious to crown his remarkable career with another dazzling chapter of political intrigue, conceived that the time had arrived when he might perhaps take up the rôle of a successful mediator between the North and the South. He gave various hints of his desire to President Lincoln, but received neither encouragement nor opportunity to unfold his plans. "Come to me after Savannah falls," was Lincoln's evasive reply; and when, on the 22d of December, Sherman announced the surrender of that city as a National Christmas gift Mr. Blair hastened to put his design into execution. Three days after Christmas the President gave him a simple card bearing the words:

Allow the bearer, F. P. Blair, Sr., to pass our lines, go South, and return.

MS. December 28, 1864. A. LINCOLN.

With this single credential he went to the camp of General Grant, from which he forwarded, by the usual flags of truce, the following letters to Jefferson Davis at Richmond:

HEADQUARTERS ARMIES OF THE UNITED STATES,
December 30, 1864.

JEFFERSON DAVIS, President, etc., etc.

MY DEAR SIR: The loss of some papers of importance (title papers), which I suppose may have been taken by some persons who had access to my house when General Early's army were in possession of my place, induces me to ask the privilege of visiting Richmond and beg the favor of you to facilitate my inquiries in regard to them.

MS. Your most obedient servant,
F. P. BLAIR.

HEADQUARTERS ARMIES OF THE UNITED STATES, CHAP. V.
December 30, 1864.

JEFFERSON DAVIS, President, etc., etc.

MY DEAR SIR: The fact stated in the inclosed note may serve to answer inquiries as to the object of my visit, which, if allowed by you, I would not communicate fully to any one but yourself. The main purpose I have in seeing you is to explain the views I entertain in reference to the state of the affairs of our country, and to submit to your consideration ideas which in my opinion you may turn to good and possibly bring to practical results— that may not only repair all the ruin the war has brought upon the nation, but contribute to promote the welfare of other nations that have suffered from it. In candor I must say to you in advance that I come to you wholly unaccredited except in so far as I may be by having permission to pass our lines and to offer to you my own suggestions — suggestions which I have submitted to no one in authority on this side the lines, and will not, without my conversation with you may lead me to suppose they may lead to something practicable. With the hope of such result, if allowed, I will confidentially unbosom my heart frankly and without reserve. You will of course hold in reserve all that is not proper to be said to one coming, as I do, merely as a private citizen and addressing one clothed with the highest responsibilities. Unless the great interests now at stake induce you to attribute more importance to my application than it would otherwise command I could not expect that you would invite the intrusion. I venture however to submit the matter to your judgment.

Your most obedient servant,

F. P. BLAIR. MS.

Mr. Davis returned a reply with permission to make the visit; but by some mischance it did not reach Mr. Blair till after his patience had become exhausted by waiting and he had returned to Washington. Proceeding then to Richmond he was received by Jefferson Davis in a confidential

Davis, "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government," Vol. II., p. 612.

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interview on the 12th of January, 1865, which he thoroughly described in a written report of which we quote the essential portions:

Blair, Report. MS. Jan., 1865.

"I introduced the subject to Mr. Davis by giving him an account of the mode in which I obtained leave to go through the lines, telling him that the President stopped me when I told him 'I had kindly relations with Mr. Davis, and at the proper time I might do something towards peace,' and said, 'Come to me when Savannah falls'— how after that event he shunned an interview with me, until I perceived he did not wish to hear me, but desired I should go without explanation of my object. I then told Mr. Davis that I wanted to know if he thought fit to communicate it, whether he had any commitments with European powers which would control his conduct in making arrangements with the Government of the United States. He said in the most decisive manner that there were none, that he had no commitments; and expressed himself with some vehemence that he was absolutely free and would die a freeman in all respects. This is pretty much his language; it was his sentiment and manner certainly. I told him that that was an all-important point, for if it were otherwise I would not have another word to say. I then prefaced the reading of the paper — which I had intended to embody in a letter to him, or present in some form if I could not reach him, or if I were prevented from seeing him personally — by saying that it was somewhat after the manner of an editorial and was not of a diplomatic character. . . He replied that he gave me his full confidence, knew that I was an earnest man, and believed I was an honest man, and

said he reciprocated the attachment which I had expressed for him and his family; that he was under great obligations to my family for kindnesses rendered to his, that he would never forget them, and that even when dying they would be remembered in his prayers. I then read the paper to him.

Blair, Report. MS. Jan., 1865.

"'*Suggestions submitted to Jefferson Davis, President, etc. etc.*

"'The Amnesty Proclamation of President Lincoln in connection with his last message to Congress, referring to the termination of the rebellion, presents a basis on which I think permanent peace and union between the warring sections of our country may be reëstablished. The amnesty offered would doubtless be enlarged to secure these objects and made to embrace all who sincerely desired to renew and confirm their allegiance to the Government of the United States by the extinction of the institution which originated the war against the National Republic. . . Slavery no longer remains an insurmountable obstruction to pacification. You propose to use the slaves in some mode to conquer a peace for the South. If this race be employed to secure the independence of the Southern States by risking their lives in the service, the achievement is certainly to be crowned with their deliverance from bondage. . . Slavery, "the cause of all our woes," is admitted now on all sides to be doomed. As an institution all the world condemns it.

"'This expiation made, what remains to distract our country? It now seems a free-will offering on the part of the South as essential to its own safety.

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Blair, Report. MS. Jan., 1865.

Being made, nothing but military force can keep the North and South asunder. . . We see them coming together again, after momentary rupture, along the Ohio, the Mississippi, upon the Gulf, the Potomac, and gradually in the interior wherever defense is assured from the military power that at first overthrew the Government. It is now plain to every sense that nothing but the interposition of the soldiery of foreign tyrannies can prevent all the States from resuming their places in the Union, casting from them the demon of discord. The few States remaining in arms that made the war for slavery as the *sine qua non* now propose to surrender it, and even the independence which was coveted to support it, as a price for foreign aid.

"'Slavery abandoned, the issue is changed and war against the Union becomes a war for monarchy; and the cry for independence of a government that assured the independence of the Southern States of all foreign powers and their equality in the Union, is converted into an appeal for succor to European potentates, to whom they offer, in return, homage as dependencies! And this is the price they propose to pay for success in breaking up the National Government! But will the people who have consented to wage this war for an institution once considered a property, now that they have abandoned it, continue the war to enslave themselves? Would they abandon slavery to commend themselves to the protection of European monarchies, and thus escape the embrace of that national Republic as a part of which they have enjoyed almost a century of prosperity and renown? The

whole aspect of the controversy upon this view is changed. The patriarchal domestic institution given up, and the idea of independence and "being let alone" in happy isolation surrendered to obtain the boon of foreign protection under the rule of monarchy.

Blair, Report. MS. Jan., 1865.

"'The most modern exemplification of this programme for discontented Republican States defeating their popular institution by intestine hostilities is found in the French emperor's Austrian deputy, Maximilian, sent to prescribe for their disorders. . . The design of Louis Napoleon in reference to conquest on this continent is not left to conjecture. With extraordinary frankness he made a public declaration that his object was to make the Latin race supreme in the Southern section of the North American continent. This is a Napoleonic idea. The great Napoleon, in a letter or one of his dictations at St. Helena, states that it had been his purpose to embody an army of negroes in San Domingo, to be landed in the slave States with French support to instigate the blacks there to insurrection, and through revolution effect conquest. Louis Napoleon saw revolution involving the struggle of races and sections on the question of slavery made to his hand, when he instantly recurred to his uncle's ideas of establishing colonies to create commerce and a navy for France and to breed the material for armies to maintain his European empire. . .

"'Jefferson Davis is the fortunate man who now holds the commanding position to encounter this formidable scheme of conquest, and whose fiat can at the same time deliver his country from the

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bloody agony now covering it in mourning. He can drive Maximilian from his American throne, and baffle the designs of Napoleon to subject our Southern people to the "Latin race." With a breath he can blow away all pretense for proscription, conscription, or confiscation in the Southern States, restore their fields to luxuriant cultivation, their ports to the commerce of the world, their constitutions and their rights under them as essentially a part of the Constitution of the United States to that strong guaranty under which they flourished for nearly a century not only as equals, but down to the hour of conflict the prevalent power on the continent. . .

Blair, Report. MS. Jan., 1865.

"'To accomplish this great good for our common country President Lincoln has opened the way in his amnesty proclamation and the message which looks to armistice. Suppose the first enlarged to embrace all engaged in the war; suppose secret preliminaries to armistice enable President Davis to transfer such portions of his army as he may deem proper for his purpose to Texas, held out to it as the land of promise; suppose this force on the banks of the Rio Grande, armed, equipped, and provided, and Juarez propitiated and rallying the Liberals of Mexico to give it welcome and support — could it not enter Mexico in full confidence of expelling the invaders, who, taking advantage of the distractions of our own Republic, have overthrown that of Mexico and established a foreign despotism to rule that land and spread its power over ours? I know Romero, the able, patriotic minister who represents the Republic of Mexico near our Government. He is intimate with my son

Montgomery, who is persuaded that he could induce Juarez to devolve all the power he can command on President Davis — a dictatorship, if necessary — to restore the rights of Mexico and her people and provide for the stability of its Government. With such hopes inspiring and a veteran army of invincibles to rally on, such a force of Mexicans might be embodied as would make the conquest of the country the work of its own people under able leading.

Blair, Report. MS. Jan., 1865.

"'But if more force were wanted than these Mexican recruits and the army of the South would supply, would not multitudes of the army of the North, officers and men, be found ready to embark in an enterprise vital to the interests of our whole Republic? The Republican party has staked itself on the assertion of the Monroe Doctrine proposed by Canning and sanctioned by a British cabinet. The Democrats of the North have proclaimed their adhesion to it, and I doubt not from the spirit exhibited by the Congress now in session, however unwilling to declare war, it would countenance all legitimate efforts short of such result to restore the Mexican Republic. . .

"'He who expels the Bonaparte-Hapsburg dynasty from our Southern flank, which General Jackson in one of his letters warned me was the vulnerable point through which foreign invasion would come, will ally his name with those of Washington and Jackson as a defender of the liberty of the country. If in delivering Mexico he should model its States in form and principle to adapt them to our Union and add a new Southern constellation to its benignant sky while rounding

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off our possession on the continent at the Isthmus, and opening the way to blending the waters of the Atlantic and Pacific, thus embracing our Republic in the arms of the ocean, he would complete the work of Jefferson, who first set one foot of our colossal Government on the Pacific by a stride from the Gulf of Mexico. Such achievement would be more highly appreciated in the South, inasmuch as it would restore the equipoise between the Northern and Southern States—if indeed such sectional distinctions could be recognized after the peculiar institution which created them had ceased to exist.'"

Blair, Report. MS. Jan., 1865.

It is of course possible that the hard mental processes in political metaphysics through which Jefferson Davis had forced his intellect in pursuing the ambitious hallucinations which led him from loyalty to treason, had blighted all generous sentiment and healthy imagination. But if his heart was yet capable of a single patriotic memory and impulse, strange emotions must have troubled him as he sat listening to the reading of this paper by the man who had been the familiar friend, the trusted adviser, it might almost be said the confidential voice, of Andrew Jackson. It was as though the ghost of the great President had come from his grave in Tennessee to draw him a sad and solemn picture of the ruin and shame to which he was bringing, and had almost brought, the American Republic, especially "his people" of the Southern States—nationality squandered, slavery doomed, and his Confederacy a supplicant for life at the hands of European despotisms. If he did not correctly realize the scene and hour in all its impressiveness, he seems at least to have tacitly

acknowledged that his sanguinary adventure in statesmanship was moribund, and that it was high time to listen earnestly to any scheme which might give hope of averting from himself and his adherents the catastrophe to whose near approach he could no longer shut his eyes. Mr. Blair's report thus narrates the remainder of the interview:

"I then said to him, 'There is my problem, Mr. Davis; do you think it possible to be solved?' After consideration he said, 'I think so.' I then said, 'You see that I make the great point of this matter that the war is no longer made for slavery, but monarchy. You know that if the war is kept up and the Union kept divided, armies must be kept afoot on both sides, and this state of things has never continued long without resulting in monarchy on one side or the other, and on both generally.' He assented to this, and with great emphasis remarked that he was like Lucius Junius Brutus, and uttered the sentiment ascribed to him in Shakspere, without exactly quoting it:

Blair, Report. MS. Jan., 1865.

> There was a Brutus once that would have brooked
> The eternal devil to keep his state in Rome
> As easily as a king.

Then he said, that he was thoroughly for popular government, that this feeling had been born and bred in him. Touching the project, he said, of bringing the sections together again, the great difficulty was the excessive vindictiveness produced by outrages perpetrated in the invaded States during the war. He said reconcilement must depend, he thought, upon time and events, which he hoped would restore better feelings, but that he was cer-

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tain that no circumstance would have a greater effect than to see the arms of our countrymen from the North and the South united in a war upon a foreign power assailing principles of government common to both sections and threatening their destruction. And he said he was convinced that all the powers of Europe felt it their interest that our people in this quarrel should exhaust all their energies in destroying each other, and thus make them a prey to the potentates of Europe, who felt that the destruction of our Government was necessary to the maintenance of the monarchical principles on which their own were founded.

Blair, Report. MS. Jan., 1865.

"I told him that I was encouraged by finding him holding these views, and believed that our country, if impressed with them, as I thought it might be universally, would soon resume its happy unity. He said I ought to know with what reluctance he had been drawn out of the Union; that he labored to the last moment to avoid it; that he had followed the old flag longer and with more devotion than anything else on earth; that at Bull Run, when he saw the flag he supposed it was his own hanging on the staff,— they were more alike then than now,— and when the flag of the United States unfurled itself in the breeze he saw it with a sigh, but he had to choose between it and his own, and he had to look to it as that of an enemy. He felt now that it was laid up, but the circumstances to which he had adverted might restore it and reconcilement be easier. With regard to Mexico, if the foreign power was driven out, it would have to depend on the events there to make it possible to connect that country with this and restore the

equipoise to which I looked; nobody could foresee how things would shape themselves. . . CHAP. V.

"Touching the matter of arrangement for reconcilement proposed by me, he remarked that all depended upon well-founded confidence, and, looking at me with very significant expression, he said, 'What, Mr. Blair, do you think of Mr. Seward?' I replied: 'Mr. Seward is a very pleasant companion; he has good social qualities, but I have no doubt that where his ambition is concerned his selfish feelings prevail over all principle. I have no doubt he would betray any man, no matter what his obligations to him, if he stood in the way of his selfish and ambitious schemes. But,' I said, 'this matter, if entered upon at all, must be with Mr. Lincoln himself. The transaction is a military transaction, and depends entirely upon the Commander-in-Chief of our armies. If he goes into it he will certainly consider it as the affair of the military head of the Government. Now I know that Mr. Lincoln is capable of great personal sacrifices — of sacrificing the strongest feelings of his heart, of sacrificing a friend when he thinks it necessary for the good of the country; and you may rely upon it, if he plights his faith to any man in a transaction for which he is responsible as an officer or a man, he will maintain his word inviolably.' Mr. Davis said he was glad to hear me say so. He did not know Mr. Lincoln; but he was sure I did, and therefore my declaration gave him the highest satisfaction. As to Mr. Seward, he had no confidence in him himself, and he did not know any man or party in the South that had any.

Blair, Report. MS. Jan., 1865

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"In relation to the mode of effecting the object about which we had been talking, he said 'we ought soon to have some understanding, because things to be done or omitted will depend upon it'; that he was willing to appoint persons to have conferences, without regard to forms; that there must be some medium of communication; that he would appoint a person or persons who could be implicitly relied on by Mr. Lincoln; that he had on a former occasion indicated Judge Campbell, of the Supreme Court, as a person who could be relied on. I told him he was a person in whom I had unbounded confidence, both as regarded talents and fidelity.

Blair Report. MS. Jan., 1865.

"In reply to some remarks that I made as to the fame he would acquire in relieving the country from all its disasters, restoring its harmony, and extending its dominion to the Isthmus, he said what his name might be in history he cared not. If he could restore the prosperity and happiness of his country, that was the end and aim of his being. For himself, death would end his cares, and that was very easy to be accomplished.

"The next day after my first interview he sent me a note, saying he thought I might desire to have something in writing in regard to his conclusion, and therefore he made a brief statement which I brought away."

Blair, Report, MS. Printed in full in Serial Chapter. "Century," Oct., 1889.

The substantial accuracy of Mr. Blair's report is confirmed by the memorandum of the same interview which Jefferson Davis wrote at the time and has since printed. In this conversation the rebel leader took little pains to disguise his entire willingness to enter upon the wild scheme of military conquest and annexation which could easily be

Davis, "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government." Vol. II., pp. 612 *et seq.*

read between the lines of a political crusade to rescue the Monroe Doctrine from its present peril. If Mr. Blair felt elated at having so quickly made a convert of the Confederate President, he was still further gratified at discovering yet more favorable symptoms in his official surrounding at Richmond. In the three or four days he spent at the rebel capital he found nearly every prominent personage convinced of the hopeless condition of the rebellion, and even eager to seize upon any contrivance to help them out of their direful prospects. The letter which he bore from Jefferson Davis to be shown to President Lincoln was in the following language:

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1865.

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA, 12 Jany., '65.

F. P. BLAIR, Esq.

SIR: I have deemed it proper, and probably desirable to you, to give you, in this form, the substance of remarks made by me, to be repeated by you to President Lincoln, etc., etc. I have no disposition to find obstacles in forms, and am willing now, as heretofore, to enter into negotiations for the restoration of peace; and am ready to send a commission whenever I have reason to suppose it will be received, or to receive a commission, if the United States Government shall choose to send one. That, notwithstanding the rejection of our former offers, I would, if you could promise that a commissioner, minister, or other agent would be received, appoint one immediately, and renew the effort to enter into conference, with a view to secure peace to the two countries.

Yours, etc.,

JEFFERSON DAVIS.

Autograph MS.

But the Government councils at Washington were not ruled by the spirit of political adventure. Abraham Lincoln had a loftier conception of patriotic duty and a higher ideal of national

CHAP. V. ethics. The proposal to divert his nation, "conceived in Liberty," from its grand task of preserving for humanity "government of the people, by the people, for the people," and degrade its heroic struggle and sacrifice to the low level of a joint filibustering foray, which, instead of crowning his work of emancipation, might perhaps eventuate in a renewal, extension, and perpetuation of slavery, did not receive from him an instant's
1865. consideration. His whole interest in Mr. Blair's mission was in the despondency of the rebel leaders which it disclosed, and the possibility of bringing them to an acknowledgment of their despair and the abandonment of their resistance. His only response to the overture thus half officially brought to his notice was to open the door of negotiation a little wider than he had done before, but for the specific and exclusive objects of union and peace. As an answer to Jefferson Davis's note he therefore wrote Mr. Blair the following:

WASHINGTON, January 18, 1865.

F. P. BLAIR, Esq.

SIR: You having shown me Mr. Davis's letter to you of the 12th instant, you may say to him that I have constantly been, am now, and shall continue ready to receive any agent whom he, or any other influential person now resisting the National authority, may informally send to me, with the view of securing peace to the people of our
Autograph MS. one common country.

Yours, etc.,

A. LINCOLN.

With this note Mr. Blair returned to Richmond, giving Mr. Davis such feeble excuses as he could hastily frame why the President had rejected his

overture for a joint invasion of Mexico,[1] alleging that Mr. Lincoln was embarrassed by radical politicians and could not use "political agencies." Mr. Blair then, but again without authority, proposed a new project, namely, that Grant and Lee should enter into negotiations, the scope and object of which, however, he seems to have left altogether vague. The simple truth is evident that Mr. Blair was, as best he might, covering his retreat from an abortive intrigue. He soon reported to Davis that military negotiation was out of the question.

Jefferson Davis therefore had only two alternatives before him—either to repeat his stubborn ultimatum of separation and independence, or frankly to accept Lincoln's ultimatum of reunion. The principal Richmond authorities knew, and some of them had tacitly admitted, that their Confederacy was nearly in collapse. Vice-President Stephens, in a secret session of the rebel Senate, had pointed out that "we could not match our opponents in numbers, and should not attempt to cope with them in direct physical power," and advocated a Fabian policy which involved the abandonment of Richmond. Judge Campbell, rebel Assistant Secretary of War, had collected facts

Stephens, "War Between the States." Vol. II., pp. 587–589.

[1] "He [Blair] then unfolded to me," writes Jefferson Davis in his book, "the embarrassment of Mr. Lincoln on account of the extreme men, in Congress and elsewhere, who wished to drive him into harsher measures than he was inclined to adopt; whence it would not be feasible for him to enter into any arrangement with us by the use of political agencies; that if anything beneficial could be effected it must be done without the intervention of the politicians. He therefore suggested that Generals Lee and Grant might enter into an arrangement by which hostilities would be suspended, and a way paved for the restoration of peace. I responded that I would willingly intrust to General Lee such negotiation as was indicated."—Davis, "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government." Vol. II., pp. 616, 617.

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Jones, "A Rebel War Clerk's Diary." Vol. II., p. 384.

Jan. 11, 1865.

and figures, which a few weeks later he embodied in a formal report, showing the South to be in practical exhaustion. Lee sent a dispatch saying he had not two days' rations for his army. Richmond was already in a panic at rumors of evacuation. Flour was selling at a thousand dollars a barrel in Confederate currency. The recent fall of Fort Fisher had closed the last avenue through which blockade runners could bring them foreign supplies. Governor Brown of Georgia was refusing to obey orders from Richmond and characterizing them as "usurping" and "despotic." Under such circumstances a defiant cry of independence would not reassure anybody; nor, on the other hand, was it longer possible to remain silent. Mr. Blair's first visit to Richmond had created general interest. Old friends plied him with eager questions and laid his truthful answers concerning their gloomy prospects solemnly to heart. The fact of his secret consultation with Davis transpired. When Mr. Blair came a second time and held a second secret consultation with the rebel President wonder and rumor rose to fever heat.

Ibid., p. 395.

Impelled to take action, Mr. Davis had not the courage to be frank. He called, first, Vice-President Stephens, and afterwards his Cabinet, to a discussion of the project. A peace commission of three was appointed, consisting of Alexander H. Stephens, Vice-President; R. M. T. Hunter, Senator and ex-Secretary of State, and John A. Campbell, Assistant Secretary of War — all of them convinced that the rebellion was hopeless, and yet unwilling to admit the logical consequences and necessities. The drafting of instructions for the

guidance of the commissioners was a difficult problem, since the explicit condition prescribed by Mr. Lincoln's note was that he would only receive an agent sent him "with the view of securing peace to the people of our one common country." The astute Mr. Benjamin, rebel Secretary of State, in order to make the instructions "as vague and general as possible," proposed the simple direction to confer "upon the subject to which it relates." His action and language were broad enough to carry the inference that in his secret heart he, too, was sick of rebellion and ready to make terms. Whether it was so meant or not, his chief refused to receive the delicate suggestion.

Benjamin to Davis, May 17, 1877. "Southern Historical Society Papers." Vol. IV., pp., 212-214.

With the ruin and defeat of the Confederate cause staring him full in the face Davis could bring himself neither to a dignified refusal nor to a resigned acceptance of the form of negotiation as Mr. Lincoln had tendered it. Even in the gulf of war and destitution into which he had led his people he could not forego the vanity of masquerading as a champion. He was unwilling, says Mr. Benjamin, to appear to betray his trust as Confederate President. "You thought, from regard to your personal honor, that your language ought to be such as to render impossible any malignant comment on your actions." But if so, why not adopt the heroic alternative and refuse to negotiate? Why resort to the yet more humiliating absurdity of sending a commission on terms which he knew Mr. Lincoln had pointedly rejected?[1]

Ibid., p. 213.

[1] [INDORSEMENT BY MR. LINCOLN.] "To-day [January 28] Mr. Blair tells me that on the 21st instant he delivered to Mr. Davis the original, of which the within is a copy, and left it with him; that at the time of delivering it Mr. Davis read it over twice in

1865.

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Instead of Mr. Benjamin's phraseology, Jefferson Davis wrote the following instruction to the commissioners, which carried a palpable contradiction on its face.

RICHMOND, January 28, 1865.

In conformity with the letter of Mr. Lincoln, of which the foregoing is a copy, you are requested to proceed to Washington City for informal conference with him upon the issues involved in the existing war, and for the purpose of securing peace to the two countries.

Southern Historical Society Papers," Vol. IV., p. 214.

Your obedient servant,

JEFFERSON DAVIS.

Mr. Blair's presence, at the close of which he (Mr. Blair) remarked that the part about 'our one common country' related to the part of Mr. Davis's letter about 'the two countries,' to which Mr. Davis replied that he so understood it. A. LINCOLN."

Autograph MS.

CHAPTER VI

THE HAMPTON ROADS CONFERENCE

WITH this double-meaning credential the commissioners presented themselves at the Union lines near Richmond on the evening of January 29, 1865, and, instead of frankly showing their authority, asked admission "in accordance with an understanding claimed to exist with Lieutenant-General Grant, on their way to Washington as peace commissioners." The application being telegraphed to Washington, Mr. Stanton answered that no one should be admitted under such character or profession until the President's instructions were received. Mr. Lincoln, being apprised of the application, promptly dispatched Major Thomas T. Eckert an officer of the War Department, with written directions to admit the commissioners under safe conduct if they would say in writing that they came for the purpose of an informal conference on the basis of his note of January 18 to Mr. Blair, "with the view of securing peace to the people of our one common country." Before this officer arrived, however, the commissioners reconsidered the form of their application and addressed a new one to General Grant, asking permission "to proceed to Washington to hold a conference with President Lincoln upon the sub-

Wilcox to Parke, Jan. 29, 1865. MS.

Stanton to Ord, Jan. 29, 1865, 10 P. M. MS.

Lincoln to Eckert, Jan. 30, 1865. MS.

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Stephens, Campbell, and Hunter to Grant, Jan. 30, 1865. MS.

ject of the existing war, and with a view of ascertaining upon what terms it may be terminated, in pursuance of the course indicated by him in his letter to Mr. Blair of January 18, 1865."

Pursuant to this request, they were provisionally conveyed to Grant's headquarters. One of them records with evident surprise the unostentatious surroundings of the General-in-Chief. "I was instantly struck with the great simplicity and perfect naturalness of his manners, and the entire absence of everything like affectation, show, or even the usual military air or *mien* of men in his position. He was plainly attired, sitting in a log cabin, busily writing on a small table, by a kerosene lamp. It was night when we arrived. There was nothing in his appearance or surroundings which indicated his official rank. There were neither guards nor aids about him. . . He furnished us with comfortable quarters on board one of his dispatch boats. The more I became acquainted with him, the more I became thoroughly impressed with the very extraordinary combination of rare elements of character which he exhibited. During the time, he met us frequently and conversed freely upon various subjects, not much upon our mission. I saw, however, very clearly that he was very anxious for the proposed conference to take place."

Stephens, "War between the States." Vol. II., p. 597.

The commissioners' note to Grant had been a substantial compliance with the requirement of President Lincoln; and so accepting it, the latter, on the 31st of January, sent Secretary Seward to meet them, giving him for this purpose the following written instructions.

EXECUTIVE MANSION,
WASHINGTON, January 31, 1865.

Hon. WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State:

You will proceed to Fortress Monroe, Virginia, there to meet and informally confer with Messrs. Stephens, Hunter, and Campbell, on the basis of my letter to F. P. Blair, Esq., of January 18, 1865, a copy of which you have. You will make known to them that three things are indispensable, to wit: *First.* The restoration of the national authority throughout all the States. *Second.* No receding by the Executive of the United States on the slavery question from the position assumed thereon in the late annual message to Congress, and in preceding documents. *Third.* No cessation of hostilities short of an end of the war, and the disbanding of all forces hostile to the Government. You will inform them that all propositions of theirs, not inconsistent with the above, will be considered and passed upon in a spirit of sincere liberality. You will hear all they may choose to say, and report it to me. You will not assume to definitely consummate anything. Yours, etc.,

ABRAHAM LINCOLN. MS.

Mr. Seward started on the morning of February 1, and simultaneously with his departure the President repeated to General Grant the monition which the Secretary of War had already sent him two days before through Major Eckert. "Let nothing which is transpiring change, hinder, or delay your military movements or plans." Grant responded to the order, promising that no armistice should ensue, adding, "The troops are kept in readiness to move at the shortest notice, if occasion should justify it." Major Eckert[1] arrived while Mr. Seward was yet on his way. On informing the commissioners of the

Lincoln to Grant, Feb. 1, 1865. MS.

Grant to Lincoln, Feb. 1, 1865. MS.

[1] Major Eckert was personally acquainted with Mr. Stephens, and the meeting between them was one of peculiar interest, as Stephens had been the means of saving Eckert's life from a secession mob in Georgia at the outbreak of the war.

CHAP. VI. President's exact requirement they replied by presenting Jefferson Davis's instruction. This was receding from the terms contained in their note to Grant, and Major Eckert promptly notified them that they could not proceed further unless they complied strictly with President Lincoln's terms. Thus at half-past nine on the night of February 1 the mission of Stephens, Hunter, and Campbell was practically at an end. It was never explained why they took this course, for the next day they again changed their minds. The only conjecture which seems plausible is that they hoped to persuade General Grant to take some extraordinary and dictatorial step. One of them hints as much in a newspaper article written long after the war. "We had tried," he wrote, "to intimate to General Grant, before we reached Old Point, that a settlement generally satisfactory to both sides could be more easily effected through him and General Lee by an armistice than in any other way. The attempt was in vain." The general had indeed listened to them with great interest and in their eagerness to convert him they had probably indulged in stronger phrases of repentance than they felt. About an hour after the commissioners refused Major Eckert's ultimatum General Grant telegraphed the following to Secretary Stanton, from which it will be seen that at least two of the commissioners had declared to him their personal willingness "to restore peace and union."

Hunter, in "Southern Historical Society Papers." Vol. III., p. 175 (April, 1877).

February 1, 10:30 P. M., 1865.

Hon. EDWIN M. STANTON, Secretary of War:

Now that the interview between Major Eckert, under his written instructions, and Mr. Stephens and party has

ended, I will state confidentially, but not officially, to become a matter of record, that I am convinced, upon conversation with Messrs. Stephens and Hunter, that their intentions are good and their desire sincere to restore peace and union. I have not felt myself at liberty to express even views of my own, or to account for my reticency. This has placed me in an awkward position, which I could have avoided by not seeing them in the first instance. I fear now their going back without any expression from any one in authority will have a bad influence. At the same time I recognize the difficulties in the way of receiving these informal commissioners at this time, and do not know what to recommend. I am sorry, however, that Mr. Lincoln cannot have an interview with the two named in this dispatch, if not all three now within our lines. Their letter to me was all that the President's instructions contemplated to secure their safe conduct, if they had used the same language to Major Eckert. CHAP. VI.

U. S. GRANT, Lieut.-General. MS.

On the morning of February 2, President Lincoln went to the War Department, and, reading Major Eckert's report, was about to recall Mr. Seward by telegraph, when Grant's dispatch was placed in his hands. The communication served to change his purpose. Resolving not to neglect the indications of sincerity here described, he immediately telegraphed in reply, "Say to the gentlemen I will meet them personally at Fortress Monroe as soon as I can get there." The commissioners by this time had decided to accept Mr. Lincoln's terms, which they did in writing to both Major Eckert and General Grant, and thereupon were at once conveyed from General Grant's headquarters at City Point to Fort Monroe, where Mr. Lincoln joined Secretary Seward on the same night. 1865. MS.

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On the morning of February 3, 1865, the rebel commissioners were conducted on board the *River Queen*, lying at anchor near Fort Monroe, where President Lincoln and Secretary Seward awaited them; and in the saloon of that steamer an informal conference of four hours' duration ensued. It was agreed beforehand that no writing or memorandum should be made at the time, so that the record of the interview remains only in the separate accounts which each of the rebel commissioners afterwards wrote out from memory, neither Mr. Seward nor President Lincoln ever having made any report in detail. Former personal acquaintance made the beginning easy and cordial, through pleasant reminiscences of the past and mutual inquiries after friends. In a careful analysis of these reports, thus furnished by the Confederates themselves, the first striking feature is the difference of intention between the parties. It is apparent that Mr. Lincoln went, honestly and frankly in all friendliness, to offer them the best terms he could to secure peace and reunion, but to abate no jot of official duty and personal dignity; while the main thought of the commissioners was to evade the express condition on which they had been admitted to conference; to seek to postpone the vital issue; and to propose an armistice, by debating a mere juggling expedient, against which they had in a private agreement with one another already committed themselves.

Mr. Stephens began the discussion by asking whether there was no way of restoring the harmony and happiness of former days; to which Mr. Lincoln replied, "There was but one way that he

knew of, and that was, for those who were resisting the laws of the Union to cease that resistance." Mr. Stephens rejoined that they had been induced to believe that both parties might for a while leave their present strife in abeyance and occupy themselves with some continental question till their anger should cool and accommodation become possible. CHAP. VI. Feb. 3, 1865.

Here Mr. Lincoln interposed promptly and frankly: "I suppose you refer to something that Mr. Blair has said. Now it is proper to state at the beginning that whatever he said was of his own accord, and without the least authority from me. When he applied for a passport to go to Richmond, with certain ideas which he wished to make known to me, I told him flatly that I did not want to hear them. If he desired to go to Richmond of his own accord, I would give him a passport; but he had no authority to speak for me in any way whatever. When he returned and brought me Mr. Davis's letter, I gave him the one to which you alluded in your application for leave to cross the lines. I was always willing to hear propositions for peace on the conditions of this letter, and on no other. The restoration of the Union is a *sine qua non* with me, and hence my instructions that no conference was to be held except upon that basis."

Despite this express disavowal, Mr. Stephens persisted in believing that Mr. Lincoln had come with ulterior designs, and went on at considerable length to elaborate his idea of a joint Mexican expedition, to be undertaken during an armistice and without a prior pledge of ultimate reunion. Such an expedition, he argued, would establish the "right of self-government to all peoples on this

CHAP. VI. continent against the dominion or control of any European power." Establishing this principle of the right of peoples to self-government would necessarily also establish, by logical sequence, the right of States to self-government; and, present passions being cooled, there would ensue "an Ocean-bound Federal Republic, under the operation of this *Continental Regulator*—the ultimate absolute sovereignty of each State." His idea was that "all the States might reasonably be expected, very soon, to return, of their own accord, to their former relations to the Union, just as they came together at first by their own consent, and for their mutual interests. Others, too, would continue to join it in the future, as they had in the past. This great law of the system would effect the same certain results in its organization as the law of gravitation in the material world."

Feb. 3, 1865.

Stephens, "War between the States." Vol. II., pp. 600–604.

Mr. Stephens does not seem to have realized how comically absurd was his effort to convert President Lincoln to the doctrine of secession by this very transparent bit of cunning, and the others listened with considerate and patient gravity. Mr. Seward at length punctured the bubble with a few well-directed sentences, when Mr. Hunter also intervened to express his entire dissent from Mr. Stephens's proposal. "In this view," reports Mr. Stephens naïvely, "he expressed the joint opinion of the commissioners; indeed, we had determined not to enter into any agreement that would require the Confederate arms to join in any invasion of Mexico." But the rebel Vice-President fails to record why, under these circumstances, he had opened this useless branch of the discussion.

Ibid., p. 608.

At this stage President Lincoln brought back the conversation pointedly to the original object of the conference: "He repeated that he could not entertain a proposition for an armistice on any terms while the great and vital question of reunion was undisposed of. That was the first question to be settled. He could enter into no treaty, convention, or stipulation, or agreement with the Confederate States, jointly or separately, upon that or any other subject, but upon the basis first settled, that the Union was to be restored. Any such agreement, or stipulation, would be a *quasi* recognition of the States then in arms against the National Government, as a separate power. That he never could do."

Feb. 3, 1865.

Stephens, "War between the States." Vol. II., p. 608.

"This branch of the discussion," also reports Judge Campbell, "was closed by Mr. Lincoln, who answered that it could not be entertained; that there could be no war without the consent of Congress, and no treaty without the consent of the Senate of the United States; that he could make no treaty with the Confederate States, because that would be a recognition of those States, and that this could not be done under any circumstances; that unless a settlement were made there would be danger that the quarrel would break out in the midst of the joint operations; that one party might unite with the common enemy to destroy the other; that he was determined to do nothing to suspend the operations for bringing the existing struggle to a close to attain any collateral end. Mr. Lincoln in this part of the conversation admitted that he had power to make a military convention, and that his arrangements under that

CHAP. VI. might extend to settle several of the points mentioned, but others it could not."

Campbell, in "Southern Magazine," Dec., 1874, p. 191.

The theory of secession as a conservative principle, and the bait of a joint expedition to steal Mexico under guise of enforcing the Monroe Doctrine, being thus cleared away, the discussion turned to the only reasonable inquiry which remained. Judge Campbell asked how restoration could be effected if the Confederate States would consent, mentioning important questions, such as the disbandment of the army, confiscation acts on both sides, the effect of the Emancipation Proclamation, representation in Congress, the division of Virginia, and so on, which would inevitably arise and require immediate adjustment. On these various topics much conversation ensued, which, even as briefly reported, is too long to be quoted entire. It will be more useful to condense, under specific

Feb. 3, 1865. headings, the substantial declarations and offers which the commissioners report Mr. Lincoln to have made.

I. RECONSTRUCTION.— The shortest way the insurgents could effect this, he said, was "by disbanding their armies and permitting the National authorities to resume their functions." Mr. Seward called attention to that phrase of his annual message where he had declared, "In stating a single condition of peace, I mean simply to say that the war will cease on the part of the Government whenever it shall have ceased on the part of those who began it." As to the rebel States being admitted to representation in Congress, "Mr. Lincoln very promptly replied that his own individual

opinion was they ought to be. He also thought they would be; but he could not enter into any stipulation upon the subject. His own opinion was that when the resistance ceased and the National authority was recognized the States would be immediately restored to their practical relations to the Union."

II. CONFISCATION ACTS.—"Mr. Lincoln said that so far as the confiscation acts and other penal acts were concerned, their enforcement was left entirely with him, and on that point he was perfectly willing to be full and explicit, and on his assurance perfect reliance might be placed. He should exercise the power of the Executive with the utmost liberality." "As to all questions," says Judge Campbell's report, "involving rights of property, the courts could determine them, and that Congress would no doubt be liberal in making restitution of confiscated property, or by indemnity, after the passions that had been excited by the war had been composed."

Stephens, "War between the States." Vol. II., pp. 609, 612, and 617.

Campbell, in "Southern Magazine," Dec., 1874, p. 192.

III. THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION.—"Mr. Lincoln said that was a judicial question. How the courts would decide it he did not know, and could give no answer. His own opinion was that as the proclamation was a war measure, and would have effect only from its being an exercise of the war power, as soon as the war ceased it would be inoperative for the future. It would be held to apply only to such slaves as had come under its operation while it was in active exercise. This was his individual opinion, but the courts might decide the other way, and hold that it effectually emancipated all the slaves in the States to which it applied at

CHAP. VI.

Stephens, "War between the States." Vol. II., pp. 610, 611.

the time. So far as he was concerned, he should leave it to the courts to decide. He never would change or modify the terms of the proclamation in the slightest particular."

At another point in the conversation "he said it was not his intention in the beginning to interfere with slavery in the States; that he never would have done it if he had not been compelled by necessity to do it to maintain the Union; that the subject presented many difficult and perplexing questions to him; that he had hesitated for some time, and had resorted to this measure only when driven to it by public necessity; that he had been in favor of the General Government prohibiting the extension of slavery into the Territories, but did not think that that Government possessed power over the subject in the States, except as a war measure; and that he had always himself been in favor of emancipation, but not immediate emancipation, even by the States. Many evils attending this appeared to him."

Ibid., pp. 613, 614.

Recurring once more to the subject of emancipation, "he went on to say that he would be willing to be taxed to remunerate the Southern people for their slaves. He believed the people of the North were as responsible for slavery as the people of the South; and if the war should then cease, with the voluntary abolition of slavery by the States, he should be in favor, individually, of the Government paying a fair indemnity for the loss to the owners. He said he believed this feeling had an extensive existence at the North. He knew some who were in favor of an appropriation as high as four hundred millions of dollars for this purpose.

'I could mention persons,' said he, 'whose names would astonish you, who are willing to do this if the war shall now cease without further expense, and with the abolition of slavery as stated.' But on this subject, he said, he could give no assurance — enter into no stipulation. He barely expressed his own feelings and views, and what he believed to be the views of others upon the subject." CHAP. VI. Stephens, "War between the States." Vol. II., p. 617.

IV. THE DIVISION OF VIRGINIA.—"Mr. Lincoln said he could only give an individual opinion, which was, that Western Virginia would continue to be recognized as a separate State in the Union."

V. THE THIRTEENTH AMENDMENT.— Mr. Seward brought to the notice of the commissioners one topic which to them was new; namely, that only a few days before, on the 31st of January, Congress had passed the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which, when ratified by three-fourths of the States, would effect an immediate abolition of slavery throughout the entire Union. The reports of the commissioners represent Mr. Seward as saying that if the South would submit and agree to immediate restoration, the restored States might yet defeat the ratification of this amendment, intimating that Congress had passed it "under the predominance of revolutionary passion," which would abate on the termination of the war. It may well be doubted whether Mr. Seward stated the case as strongly as the commissioners intimate, since he himself, like Mr. Lincoln and his entire cabinet, had favored the measure. It is probable that the commissioners allowed their own feelings and wishes to color too strongly the hypothesis he stated, and to interpret as a probability what 1865.

CHAP. VI. he mentioned as only among the possible events of the future.

It will be seen that in what he said upon these various propositions Mr. Lincoln was always ex-

Feb. 3, 1865. tremely careful to discriminate between what he was authorized under the Constitution to do as Executive, and what would devolve upon coördinate branches of the Government under their own powers and limitations. With the utmost circumspection he pointed out the distinctions between his personal opinions and wishes and his official authority. More especially, however, did he repeat and emphasize the declaration that he would do none of the things mentioned or promised without a previous pledge of reunion and cessation of resistance. "Even in case the Confederate States should entertain the proposition of a return to the Union," says Mr. Stephens's narrative, "he persisted in asserting that he could not enter into any agreement upon this subject [reconstruction], or upon any other matters of that sort, with parties in arms against the Government. Mr. Hunter interposed, and in illustration of the propriety of the Executive entering into agreements with persons in arms against the acknowledged rightful public authority referred to repeated instances of this character between Charles I. of England and the people in arms against him. Mr. Lincoln in reply to this said: 'I do not profess to be posted in history. On all such matters I will turn you over to Seward. All I distinctly recollect about the case of Charles I. is that he lost his head.'"

The pertinent retort reduced Mr. Hunter to his last rhetorical resource — a complaint that the

Confederate States and their people were by these terms forced to unconditional surrender and submission. To this Mr. Seward replied with patience and dignity, "That no words like unconditional submission had been used, or any importing or justly implying degradation, or humiliation even, to the people of the Confederate States. . . Nor did he think that in yielding to the execution of the laws under the Constitution of the United States, with all its guarantees and securities for personal and political rights, as they might be declared to be by the courts, could be properly considered as unconditional submission to conquerors, or as having anything humiliating in it. The Southern people and the Southern States would be under the Constitution of the United States, with all their rights secured thereby, in the same way, and through the same instrumentalities, as the similar rights of the people of the other States were."

Stephens, "War between the States." Vol. II., pp. 616, 617.

The reader will recall that in his last annual message President Lincoln declared his belief, based "on careful consideration of all the evidence accessible," that it was useless to attempt to negotiate with Jefferson Davis, but that the prospect would be better with his followers. Mr. Lincoln had evidently gone to Fort Monroe in hope of making some direct impression upon Stephens and Hunter, whom Grant represented as having such good intentions "to restore peace and union." Seizing the proper opportunity, he pressed upon Stephens the suggestion of separate State action to bring about a discontinuance of hostilities. Addressing him, he said:

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"If I resided in Georgia, with my present sentiments, I 'll tell you what I would do if I were in your place. I would go home and get the Governor of the State to call the Legislature together, and get them to recall all the State troops from the war; elect Senators and Members to Congress, and ratify this constitutional amendment prospectively, so as to take effect — say in five years. Such a ratification would be valid, in my opinion. I have looked into the subject, and think such a prospective ratification would be valid. Whatever may have been the views of your people before the war, they must be convinced now that slavery is doomed. It cannot last long in any event, and the best course, it seems to me, for your public men to pursue would be to adopt such a policy as will avoid, as far as possible, the evils of immediate emancipation. This would be my course, if I were in your place."

Stephens, "War between the States." Vol. II., p. 614.

The salutary advice was wasted. Mr. Stephens was a very incarnation of political paradoxes. Perhaps in all the South there was not another man whose personal desires were so moderate and correct, and whose political theories were so radical and wrong. At the beginning he had opposed secession as premature and foolish, war as desperate and ruinous; yet, against his better judgment, he had followed his "corner-stone" theory of slavery and his "supremacy" theory of States rights to the war and the ruin he foretold. Now, at the end of four years' experiment, he still clung obstinately to his new theory of secession as a "continental regulator," and the vain hope that Mr. Lincoln would yet adopt it. When at last the parties were separating, with friendly handshakings, he

asked Mr. Lincoln to reconsider the plan of an armistice on the basis of a Mexican expedition. "Well, Stephens," replied Mr. Lincoln, "I will reconsider it; but I do not think my mind will change." And so ended the Hampton Roads conference.

Stephens, "War between the States." Vol. II., pp. 610–618.

The commissioners returned to Richmond in great disappointment, and communicated the failure of their efforts to Jefferson Davis, whose chagrin was as great as their own. They had all caught eagerly at the hope that this negotiation would somehow extricate them from the dilemmas and dangers whose crushing portent they realized, but had no power to avert except by surrender; and now, when this last hope failed them, they were doubly cast down. Campbell says he "favored negotiations for peace"—doubtless meaning by this language that he advocated the acceptance of the proffered terms. Stephens yet believed that Mr. Lincoln would be tempted by the Mexican scheme and would reconsider his decision. He therefore advised that the results of the meeting should be kept secret; and when the other commissioners and Davis refused to follow this advice, he gave up the Confederate cause as hopeless, withdrew from Richmond, abandoned the rebellion, and went into retirement. His signature to the brief public report of the commissioners stating the result of the Hampton Roads Conference was his last participation in the ill-starred enterprise.

Campbell, "Recollections," etc. Pamphlet.

Stephens, "War between the States." Vol. II., pp. 624–626.

Davis took the only course open to him after refusing the honorable peace which Mr. Lincoln had tendered. He transmitted the commissioners' report to the rebel Congress with a brief and dry

CHAP. VI. message, stating that the enemy refused any terms except those the conqueror may grant; and then arranged as vigorous an effort as the circumstances permitted, once more to "fire the Southern heart." A public meeting was called, and on the evening
1865. of February 6, Jefferson Davis and others made speeches at the African Church,[1] which, judging from the meager reports that were printed, were as denunciatory and bellicose as the bitterest Confederate could have wished. Davis, particularly, is represented to have excelled himself in defiant heroics. "Sooner than we should ever be united again," he said, "he would be willing to yield up everything he had on earth — if it were possible he would sacrifice a thousand lives"; and further announced his confidence that they would yet "compel the Yankees, in less than twelve
"Richmond Dispatch," Feb. 7, 1865. months, to petition us for peace on our own terms." He denounced President Lincoln as "His

[1] This meeting at the African Church was supplemented, a few days later, by a grand concerted effort at public speech-making at different places in Richmond, intended to electrify the South. Pollard, the Southern historian, thus describes it: "All business was suspended in Richmond; at high noon processions were formed to the different places of meeting; and no less than twenty different orators, composed of the most effective speakers in Congress and the cabinet, and the most eloquent divines of Richmond, took their stands in the halls of legislation, in the churches and the theaters, and swelled the eloquence of this last grand appeal to the people and armies of the South. . . It was an extraordinary day in Richmond; vast crowds huddled around the stands of the speakers or lined the streets; and the air was vocal with the efforts of the orator and the responses of his audience. It appeared indeed that the blood of the people had again been kindled. But it was only the sickly glare of an expiring flame; there was no steadiness in the excitement; there was no virtue in huzzas; the inspiration ended with the voices and ceremonies that invoked it; and it was found that the spirit of the people of the Confederacy was too weak, too much broken, to react with effect or assume the position of erect and desperate defiance."—Pollard, "The Lost Cause," pp. 684, 685.

Majesty Abraham the First," and said "before the campaign was over he and Seward might find 'they had been speaking to their masters.'"

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Jones, "A Rebel War Clerk's Diary." Vol. II., p. 411.

This extravagant rhetoric would seem merely grotesque were it not embittered by the reflection that it was the signal which carried many additional thousands of brave soldiers to bloody graves in continuing a palpably hopeless military struggle.

CHAPTER VII

THE SECOND INAUGURAL

CHAP. VII

WE have seen what effect the Hampton Roads Conference produced upon Jefferson Davis, and to what intemperate and wrathful utterance it provoked him. Its effect upon President Lincoln

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was almost directly the reverse. His interview with the rebel commissioners doubtless strengthened his former convictions that the rebellion was waning in enthusiasm and resources, and that the Union cause must triumph at no distant day. Secure in his renewal of four years' personal leadership, and hopefully inspirited by every sign of early victory in the war, his only thought was to shorten, by generous conciliation, the period of the dreadful conflict. His temper was not one of exultation, but of broad, patriotic charity, and of keen, sensitive personal sympathy for the whole country and all its people, South as well as North. His conversation with Stephens, Hunter, and Campbell had probably revealed to him glimpses of the undercurrent of their anxiety that fraternal bloodshed and the destructive ravages of war might somehow come to an end.

To every word or tone freighted with this feeling, the magnanimous and tender heart of Presi-

dent Lincoln sincerely responded. As a ruler and a statesman, he was clear in his judgment and inflexible in his will to reëstablish union and maintain freedom for all who had gained it by the chances of war; but also as a statesman and a ruler, he was ready to lend his individual influence and his official discretion to any measure of mitigation and manifestation of good-will that, without imperiling the union of the States, or the liberty of the citizen, might promote acquiescence in impending political changes, and abatement and reconcilement of hostile sectional feelings. Filled with such thoughts and purposes, he spent the day after his return from Hampton Roads in considering and perfecting a new proposal, designed as a peace-offering to the States in rebellion. On the evening of February 5, 1865, he called his Cabinet together and read to them the following draft of a message and proclamation, which he had written during the day, and upon which he invited their opinion and advice: CHAP. VII.

Fellow-citizens of the Senate and House of Representatives: I respectfully recommend that a joint resolution, substantially as follows, be adopted, so soon as practicable, by your honorable bodies: "Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the President of the United States is hereby empowered, in his discretion, to pay four hundred millions of dollars to the States of Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia, in the manner and on the conditions following, to wit: The payment to be made in six per cent. Government bonds, and to be distributed among said States *pro rata* on their respective slave populations as Feb. 5, 1865

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shown by the census of 1860, and no part of said sum to be paid unless all resistance to the National authority shall be abandoned and cease, on or before the first day of April next; and upon such abandonment and ceasing of resistance one-half of said sum to be paid, in manner aforesaid, and the remaining half to be paid only upon the amendment of the National Constitution recently proposed by Congress becoming valid law, on or before the first day of July next, by the action thereon of the requisite number of States."

The adoption of such resolution is sought with a view to embody it, with other propositions, in a proclamation looking to peace and reunion.

Whereas, a joint resolution has been adopted by Congress, in the words following, to wit:

Now therefore I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, do proclaim, declare, and make known, that on the conditions therein stated, the power conferred on the Executive in and by said joint resolution will be fully exercised; that war will cease and armies be reduced to a basis of peace; that all political offenses will be pardoned; that all property, except slaves, liable to confiscation or forfeiture, will be released therefrom, except in cases of intervening interests of third parties; and that liberality will be recommended to Congress upon all points not lying within Executive control.

MS.

It may be said with truth that this was going to the extreme of magnanimity toward a foe already in the throes and helplessness of overwhelming defeat — a foe that had rebelled without adequate cause and was maintaining the contest without reasonable hope. But Mr. Lincoln remembered that the rebels, notwithstanding all their offenses and errors, were yet American citizens, members of the same nation, brothers of the same blood. He remembered, too, that the object of the war, equally with peace and freedom, was the maintenance of one government and the perpetuation of one

Feb., 1864.

Union. Not only must hostilities cease, but dissension, suspicion, and estrangement be eradicated. As it had been in the past, so it must again become in the future — not merely a nation with the same Constitution and laws, but a people united in feeling, in hope, in aspiration. In his judgment, the liberality that would work reconciliation would be well employed. Whether their complaints for the past were well or ill founded, he would remove even the temptation to complain in the future. He would give them peace, reunion, political pardon, remission of confiscation wherever it was in his power, and securing unquestioned and universal freedom through the constitutional amendment, he would at the same time compensate their loss of slavery by a direct money equivalent. CHAP. VII. 1865.

It turned out that he was more humane and liberal than his constitutional advisers. The indorsement of his own handwriting on the manuscript draft of his proposed message records the result of his appeal and suggestion:

"FEBRUARY 5, 1865. To-day these papers, which explain themselves, were drawn up and submitted to the Cabinet and unanimously disapproved by them. A. LINCOLN." MS.

It would appear that there was but little discussion of the proposition. The President's evident earnestness on the one side, and the unanimous dissent of the Cabinet on the other, probably created an awkward situation which could be best relieved by silence on each hand. The diary of Secretary Welles gives only a brief mention of the important incident, but it reflects the feeling which pervaded the Cabinet chamber:

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MONDAY, February 6, 1865.

There was a Cabinet meeting last evening. The President had matured a scheme which he hoped would be successful in promoting peace. It was a proposition for paying the expense of the war for two hundred days, or four hundred millions, to the rebel States, to be for the extinguishment of slavery or for such purpose as the States were disposed. This, in few words, was the scheme. It did not meet with favor, but was dropped. The earnest desire of the President to conciliate and effect peace was manifest, but there may be such a thing as so overdoing as to cause a distrust or adverse feeling. In the present temper of Congress the proposed measure, if a wise one, could not be carried through successfully; I do not think the scheme could accomplish any good results. The rebels would misconstrue it if the offer were made. If attempted and defeated it would do harm.

MS.

The statement of Secretary Usher, written many years afterward from memory, also records the deep feeling with which the President received the non-concurrence of his Executive Council: "The members of the Cabinet were all opposed. He seemed somewhat surprised at that and asked, 'How long will the war last?' No one answered, but he soon said: 'A hundred days. We are spending now in carrying on the war three millions a day, which will amount to all this money, besides all the lives.' With a deep sigh he added, 'But you are all opposed to me, and I will not send the message.'"

'New York Tribune," Sept. 13, 1885.

The entry made by Secretary Welles in his diary on the morning after the Cabinet meeting, as to the amount and time, is undoubtedly the correct one, coinciding as it does with the President's manuscript. But the discrepancy in the figures of the two witnesses is of little moment. Both ac-

counts show us that the proposal was not based on sentiment alone, but upon a practical arithmetical calculation. An expenditure of three or four hundred millions was inevitable; but his plan would save many precious lives, would shield homes and hearths from further sorrow and desolation, would dissolve sectional hatred, and plant fraternal good-will. Though overborne in opinion, clearly he was not convinced. With the words, "You are all opposed to me," sadly uttered, Mr. Lincoln folded up the paper and ceased the discussion of what was doubtless the project then nearest his heart. We may surmise, however, that, as he wrote upon it the indorsement we have quoted and laid it away, he looked forward to a not distant day when, in the new term of the Presidency to which he was already elected, the Cabinet would respond more charitably to his own generous impulses.

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Few Cabinet secrets were better kept than this proposal of the President and its discussion. Since the subject was indefinitely postponed, it was, of course, desirable that it should not come to the knowledge of the public. Silence was rendered easier by the fact that popular attention in the North busied itself with rumors concerning the Hampton Roads Conference. To satisfy this curiosity a resolution of the House of Representatives, passed on February 8, requested the President to communicate such information respecting it as he might deem not incompatible with the public interest. With this request Mr. Lincoln complied on the 10th, by a message containing all the correspondence, followed by a brief report touching the points of conference:

"Globe," Feb. 8, 1865, p. 665.

CHAP. VII. On the morning of the 3d the three gentlemen, Messrs. Stephens, Hunter, and Campbell, came aboard of our steamer, and had an interview with the Secretary of State and myself of several hours' duration. No question of preliminaries to the meeting was then and there made or mentioned. No other person was present; no papers were exchanged or produced; and it was, in advance, agreed that the conversation was to be informal and verbal merely. On our part, the whole substance of the instructions to the Secretary of State, hereinbefore recited, was stated and insisted upon, and nothing was said inconsistent therewith; while, by the other party, it was not said that in any event or on any condition they ever would consent to reunion; and yet they equally omitted to declare that they never would so consent. They seemed to desire a postponement of that question, and the adoption of some other course first, which, as some of them seemed to argue, might or might not lead to reunion; but which course, we thought, would amount to an indefinite postponement.

MS. The conference ended without result.

"Globe," Feb. 10, 1865, pp. 730–735. A short discussion occurred in the House on the motion to print this message, but it did not rise above the level of an ordinary party wrangle. The few Democrats who took part in it complained of the President for refusing an armistice, while the Republicans retorted with Jefferson Davis's condition about the "two countries" and the more recent declarations of his Richmond harangue, announcing his readiness to perish for independence. On the whole, both Congress and the country were gratified that the incident had called out Mr. Lincoln's renewed declaration of an unalterable resolve to maintain the Union. Patriotic hope was quickened and public confidence strengthened by noting once more his singleness of purpose and steadfastness of faith. No act of his could have formed a more fitting prelude to his second inauguration, which

was now rapidly approaching, and the preliminary steps of which were at this time being consummated. CHAP. VII.

A new phase of the reconstruction question was developed in the usual Congressional routine of counting the electoral votes of the late Presidential election. 1865. Former chapters have set forth the President's general views on reconstruction, and shown that though the executive and legislative branches of the Government differed as to the theory and policy of restoring insurrectionary States to their normal Federal functions, such difference had not reached the point of troublesome or dangerous antagonism. Over the new question also dissension and conflict were happily avoided. By instruction to his military commanders and in private letters to prominent citizens Mr. Lincoln had strongly advised and actively promoted the formation of loyal State governments in Louisiana, Tennessee, and Arkansas, and had maintained the restored Government of Virginia after the division of that State and the admission of West Virginia into the Union, and had officially given them the recognition of the Executive Department of the Government. The Legislative Department, however, had latterly withheld its recognition, and refused them representation in Congress. The query now arose whether the popular and electoral votes of some of those States for President should be allowed and counted.

The subject was taken up by the House, which, on January 30, passed a joint resolution naming the insurrectionary States, declaring them to have been "in armed rebellion" on the 8th of November,

CHAP. VII. 1864, and not entitled to representation in the electoral college. A searching debate on this resolution arose in the Senate, which called out the best legal talent of that body. It could not very consistently be affirmed that Louisiana, Tennessee, and Arkansas, held by Federal troops and controlled by Federal commanders in part at least, were "in armed rebellion" on election day, under whatever constitutional theory of reconstruction. The phraseology was finally amended to read that the rebel States "were in such condition on the 8th day of November, 1864, that no valid election for electors of President and Vice-President of the United States, according to the Constitution and laws thereof, was held therein on said day," and in this form the joint resolution was passed by both Houses. Joint resolutions of Congress have all the force and effect of laws, and custom requires the President to approve them in the same manner as regular acts. His signature in this case might therefore be alleged to imply that he consented to or adopted a theory of reconstruction at variance with his former recommendation and action. To avoid the possibility of such misconstruction, Mr. Lincoln sent Congress a short message, in which he said:

"Globe," Jan. 30, 1865, p. 505.

"Globe," Feb. 4, 1865, pp. 595, 602.

> The joint resolution, entitled "Joint resolution declaring certain States not entitled to representation in the electoral college," has been signed by the Executive, in deference to the view of Congress implied in its passage and presentation to him. In his own view, however, the two Houses of Congress, convened under the twelfth article of the Constitution, have complete power to exclude from counting all electoral votes deemed by them to be illegal; and it is not competent for the Executive to

defeat or obstruct that power by a veto, as would be the case if his action were at all essential in the matter. He disclaims all right of the Executive to interfere in any way in the matter of canvassing or counting electoral votes; and he also disclaims that, by signing said resolution, he has expressed any opinion on the recitals of the preamble, or any judgment of his own upon the subject of the resolution.

Lincoln, Message, Feb. 8, 1865. MS. "Globe," Feb. 10, 1865, p. 711.

In anticipation of possible debate and contention on the subject of counting the electoral votes of reconstructed States, Congress had, on February 6, adopted what afterwards became famous as the Twenty-second Joint Rule, which directed in substance that all such questions should be decided, not by the joint convention of the two Houses, but by each House for itself without debate, the two Houses having temporarily separated for that purpose; and requiring the concurrence of both for any affirmative action, or to count a vote objected to. When the two Houses met in joint convention on the eighth day of February, mention was made by the Vice-President, presiding, that "The Chair has in his possession returns from the States of Louisiana and Tennessee; but in obedience to the law of the land, the Chair holds it to be his duty not to present them to the Convention." No member insisted on having these returns opened, since they could not possibly change the result. Only the returns therefore from the loyal States, including West Virginia, were counted, showing 212 electoral votes for Lincoln, and 21 for McClellan.[1] The Vice-President thereupon announced

"Globe," Feb. 6, 1865, pp. 608, 628.

"Globe," Feb. 8, 1865, p. 668.

[1] Since the Presidential election of 1860 three additional States had been admitted into the Union, namely, Kansas, January, 29, 1861, casting three electoral votes; West Virginia, June 19, 1863, casting five electoral votes; and Nevada, October

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"that Abraham Lincoln of the State of Illinois, having received a majority of the whole number of electoral votes, is duly elected President of the United States for four years, commencing on the fourth day of March, 1865."

"Globe," Feb. 8, 1865, p. 669.

The usual committee was appointed to wait upon Mr. Lincoln and notify him of his second election; and in response to their announcement he read the following brief address:

"With deep gratitude to my countrymen for this mark of their confidence; with a distrust of my own ability to perform the duty required, under the most favorable circumstances, and now rendered doubly difficult by existing National perils; yet with a firm reliance on the strength of our free Government and the eventual loyalty of the people to the just principles upon which it is founded, and, above all, with an unshaken faith in the Supreme Ruler of Nations, I accept this trust. Be pleased to signify this to the respective Houses of Congress."[1]

In the informal friendly conversation which followed, the President said to the committee, in substance: "Having served four years in the depths of a great and yet unended National peril, I can view this call to a second term in nowise more

31, 1864, entitled to three electoral votes, but casting only two because of a vacancy.

The States which voted for Lincoln were: California, Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

The States which voted for McClellan, were: Delaware, Kentucky, and New Jersey.

[1] MS. The reply reported by the notification committee, and printed in the "Congressional Globe," is incorrect, having apparently been written out from memory, intermingling an abstract of the formal paper which the President read, with the informal conversation that succeeded.

flattering to myself than as an expression of the public judgment that I may better finish a difficult work in which I have labored from the first than could any one less severely schooled to the task." CHAP. VII. "Globe," March 1, 1865, p. 1263.

The formal inauguration of Mr. Lincoln for his second Presidential term took place at the appointed time, March 4, 1865. There is little variation in the simple but impressive pageantry with which this official ceremony is celebrated. The principal novelty commented upon by the newspapers was the share which the hitherto enslaved race had for the first time in this public and political drama. Civic associations of negro citizens joined in the procession, and a battalion of negro soldiers formed part of the military escort. The weather was sufficiently favorable to allow the ceremonies to take place on the eastern portico, in view of a vast throng of spectators. Imaginative beholders, who were prone to draw augury and comfort from symbols, could rejoice that the great bronze Statue of Freedom now crowned the dome of the Capitol, and that her guardianship was justified by the fact that the Thirteenth Amendment virtually blotted slavery from the Constitution. The central act of the occasion was President Lincoln's second inaugural address, which enriched the political literature of the Union with another masterpiece, and which deserves to be quoted in full. He said:

FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN: At this second appearing to take the oath of the Presidential office, there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at the first. Then, a statement, somewhat in detail, of a course to be pursued, seemed fitting and proper. Now, at the expiration of four years, during which public declara- Mar. 4, 1865

CHAP. VII. tions have been constantly called forth on every point and phase of the great contest which still absorbs the
Mar. 4, 1865. attention and engrosses the energies of the nation, little that is new could be presented. The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends, is as well known to the public as to myself; and it is, I trust, reasonably satisfactory and encouraging to all. With high hope for the future, no prediction in regard to it is ventured.

On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago, all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil war. All dreaded it — all sought to avert it. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to saving the Union without war, insurgent agents were in the city seeking to destroy it without war — seeking to dissolve the Union, and divide effects, by negotiation. Both parties deprecated war; but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive; and the other would accept war rather than let it perish. And the war came.

One-eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the Southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was, somehow, the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union, even by war; while the Government claimed no right to do more than to restrict the territorial enlargement of it. Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes his aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces; but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered — that of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has his own purposes. "Woe unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom

the offense cometh." If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through his appointed time, he now wills to remove, and that he gives to both North and South this terrible war, as the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to him? Fondly do we hope — fervently do we pray — that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan — to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations.

The address being concluded, Chief-Justice Chase administered the oath of office; and listeners who heard Abraham Lincoln for the second time repeat, "I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States," went from the impressive scene to their several homes with thankfulness and with confidence that the destiny of the country and the liberty of the citizen were in safe keeping. "The fiery trial" through which he had hitherto walked showed him possessed of the capacity, the courage, and the will to keep the promise of his oath.

CHAP. VII.

Among the many criticisms passed by writers and thinkers upon the language of the second inaugural, none will so interest the reader as that of Mr. Lincoln himself, written about ten days after its delivery, in the following letter to a friend:

Lincoln to Weed, Mar. 15, 1865. Weed, "Memoirs." Vol. II., pp. 449, 450.

DEAR MR. WEED: Every one likes a compliment. Thank you for yours on my little notification speech and on the recent inaugural address. I expect the latter to wear as well as, perhaps better than, anything I have produced; but I believe it is not immediately popular. Men are not flattered by being shown that there has been a difference of purpose between the Almighty and them. To deny it, however, in this case, is to deny that there is a God governing the world. It is a truth which I thought needed to be told, and, as whatever of humiliation there is in it falls most directly on myself, I thought others might afford for me to tell it.

A careful student of Mr. Lincoln's character will also find this inaugural address instinct with another meaning, which, very naturally, the President's own comment did not touch. The eternal law of compensation, which it declares and applies to the sin and fall of American slavery, in a diction rivaling the fire and the dignity of the old Hebrew prophecies,[1] may, without violent inference, be interpreted

[1] Mgr. Dupanloup, Bishop of Orleans, in a letter, dated 2d April, 1865, to M. Auguste Cochin, acknowledging the receipt of Lincoln's second inaugural, said: "J'ai lu ce document avec la plus religieuse émotion, avec l'admiration la plus sympathique. . . . M. Lincoln exprime, avec une solennelle et touchante gravité, les sentiments qui, j'en suis sûr, envahissent les âmes d'élite, au Nord comme au Sud. Quel beau jour lorsque l'union des âmes se fera là, dans la vraie et parfaite lumière de l'Évangile. Mais quel beau jour déjà lorsque le chef deux fois élu d'un grand peuple tient un langage chrétien, trop absent, dans notre Europe, du langage officiel des grandes affaires, annonce la fin de l'esclavage, et prépare les embrassements de la justice et de la miséricorde dont l'Écriture Sainte a parlé. Je vous remercie de m'avoir fait lire cette belle page de l'histoire des grands hommes."

to foreshadow an intention to renew at a fitting moment the brotherly good-will gift to the South which has been treated of in the first part of this chapter. Such an inference finds strong corroboration in the phrases which closed the last public address he ever made, and which we have elsewhere quoted in full. On Tuesday evening, April 11, a considerable assemblage of citizens of Washington gathered at the Executive Mansion to celebrate the victory of Grant over Lee. The rather long and careful speech which Mr. Lincoln made on that occasion was, however, less about the past than the future. It discussed the subject of reconstruction, as illustrated in the case of Louisiana, showing also how that issue was related to the questions of emancipation, the condition of the freedmen, the welfare of the South, and the ratification of the constitutional amendment. "So new and unprecedented is the whole case," he concluded, "that no exclusive and inflexible plan can safely be prescribed as to details and collaterals. Such exclusive and inflexible plan would surely become a new entanglement. Important principles may and must be inflexible. In the present situation, as the phrase goes, it may be my duty to make some new announcement to the people of the South. I am considering, and shall not fail to act when satisfied that action will be proper." Can any one doubt that this "new announcement" which was taking shape in his mind would again have embraced and combined justice to the blacks and generosity to the whites of the South, with union and liberty for the whole country?

Ante, Vol. IX., pp. 457–463.

CHAPTER VIII

FIVE FORKS

CHAP. VIII. 1864

FROM the hour of Mr. Lincoln's reëlection the Confederate cause was doomed. The cheering of the troops which greeted the news from the North was heard within the lines at Richmond and at Petersburg, and although the leaders maintained to the end their attitude of defiance, the impression rapidly gained ground among the people that the end was not far off. The stimulus of hope being gone, they began to feel the pinch of increasing want. Their currency had become almost worthless. In October a dollar in gold was worth thirty-five dollars in Confederate money; a month later it brought fifty dollars; with the opening of the new year the price rose to sixty dollars, and soon after to seventy; and despite the efforts of the Confederate treasury, which would occasionally rush into the market and beat down the price of gold ten or twenty per cent. in a day, the currency gradually depreciated until a hundred for one was offered and not taken.

As a result of this vanishing value of their money a portentous rise took place in the prices of all the necessaries of life. It is hard for a people

to recognize that their money is good for nothing; to do this is to confess that their Government has failed: it was natural, therefore, for the unhappy citizens of Richmond to think that monstrous prices were being extorted for food, clothing, and fuel, when, in fact, they were paying no more than was reasonable. The journals and diaries of the time are filled with bitter execrations against the extortioners and forestallers; but when we translate their prices into the gold standard, we wonder how the grocers and clothiers lived. To pay a thousand dollars for a barrel of flour was enough to strike a householder with horror; but ten dollars is not a famine price. A suit of clothes cost from one thousand to fifteen hundred dollars; but if you divide this sum by seventy-five, there is very little profit left for the tailor. High prices, however, even if paid in dry leaves, are a hardship when dry leaves are not plentiful; and there was scarcity, even of Confederate money, in the South. In Richmond, which lived upon the war, the dearth was especially evident. The clerks in the departments received say four thousand dollars a year, hardly enough for a month's provisions. Skilled mechanics fared somewhat better. They could earn, so long as they kept out of the army, something like six thousand dollars a year. Statesmanship was cheap. A congressman's pay was five thousand five hundred dollars; but most of the civil officers of the Government managed to get their supplies at cost prices from the military stores. It was illegal; but they could not have lived otherwise, and they doubtless considered their lives necessary to their country.

CH. VIII.

The depreciation of the Confederate currency was an unmistakable symptom of a lack of confidence in the course of affairs, since it did not arise from inflation. On the contrary, George A. Trenholm, the Secretary of the Treasury, did all he could to check this dangerous tendency, going so far as to incur the reproaches of many who imagined his action enhanced prices. All dealers instinctively felt the money was worthless, and their only object was to get it out of their hands as soon as possible, at whatever prices, in exchange for objects of real value. One Confederate diarist records with indignation that he saw a Jew buy at auction an old set of tablespoons for $575, and makes this a cause of complaint against the Government, which permits men to acquire in this way the means of running away. Anybody who was able to leave the country became the object of the envy and hatred of those who remained behind. They began to treat their own financial system with contempt. When the officer in charge of the Treasury Note Bureau at Columbia, alarmed at the approach of Sherman, asked where he was to go, he could get no attention to his inquiries; one high functionary advising that he go to the devil.

Jones, "A Rebel War Clerk's Diary." Vol. II., p. 361.

Jan., 1865.

Jones, "A Rebel War Clerk's Diary." Vol. II., p. 384.

At every advance of General Grant's lines a new disturbance and alarm was manifested in Richmond, the first proof of which was always a fresh rigor in the enforcement, not only of existing conscription laws, but of the arbitrary orders of the frightened authorities. After the capture of Fort Harrison, on the north side of the James, squads of guards were sent into the streets with directions to arrest every able-bodied man they met. They paid

no regard to passes or to certificates of exemption or detail, but hurried the unhappy civilians off to the field, or herded them, pending their assignment to companies, within the railings of the public square. Two members of the Cabinet, John H. Reagan and George Davis, were thus arrested on the streets by the zealous guards in spite of their protestations, though they were, of course, soon recognized and released. The pavements were swept of every class of loiterers; the clerks in the departments with their exemptions in their pockets were carried off, whether able to do duty or not. It is said by one Confederate writer that the medical boards were ordered to exempt no one who seemed capable of bearing arms for ten days, and he mentions an instance where a man died, on the eleventh day of his service, of consumption. Human nature will not endure such a strain as this: a week after this sweeping of Richmond for recruits, General William M. Gardner reported that more than half the men thus dragged to the trenches had deserted. Of those who remained, the members of influential families came, one by one, back to the town on various pretexts, increasing the bitterness of feeling among those too poor or too obscure to rescue their sons and brothers.

Jones, "A Rebel War Clerk's Diary." Vol. II., p. 305.

Desertion grew too common to punish. Almost every man in the Confederacy was, by statute or decree, liable to military service, and yet hundreds of thousands of them were not in the army. If men were to be shot for deserting it would have been a question whether there were soldiers enough to shoot them. Mr. Davis acted prudently in remit-

CHAP. VIII. ting the death sentences laid before him, although this occasioned great dissatisfaction in the army. Near the end of the year 1864 Longstreet reported one hundred men of Pickett's division as in the guard-house for desertion, attributing the blame for it to the numerous reprieves which had been granted, no one having been executed for two months. General Lee sent this report to Richmond
Nov. 29, 1864. with his approval, which gave great offense to the Confederate President. He returned the paper with an indorsement to the effect that the remis-
Jones, "A Rebel War Clerk's Diary," pp. 343, 344. sion of sentences was not a proper subject for the criticism of a military commander.

As disaster increased, as each day brought its catastrophe, the Confederate Government steadily lost ground in the confidence and respect of the Southern people. It is characteristic of every failing revolt that in the hour of ruin the participators turn upon one another with reproaches, often as causeless and unjust as those they cast upon their legitimate government. Mr. Davis and his councilors now underwent this natural retribution. They were doing their best, but they no longer got any credit for it. From every part of the Confederacy came complaints of what was done, demands for what it was impossible to do. Some of the States were in a condition near to counter-revolution. Governor Brown of Georgia made no pretense of concealing his contumacy. The march of Sherman across his State seemed to have emancipated him from any feeling of obligation to the Confederacy. His letters to Richmond from that moment lost all color of allegiance. The feeling in North Carolina was little better. A slow paralysis was benumbing

the limbs of the insurrection, and even at the heart its vitality was plainly declining. CHAP. VIII.

The Confederate Congress, which had hitherto been the mere register of the President's will, now turned upon him and gave him wormwood to drink. On the 19th of January they passed a resolution making Lee general-in-chief of the army. This Mr. Davis might have borne with patience, although it was intended as a notification to him that his meddling with military affairs must come to an end. But far worse was the necessity put upon him, as a sequel to this act,— and in conformity with a resolution of Congress and of the Virginia Legislature,— of reappointing General Joseph E. Johnston to the command of the army which was to resist Sherman's victorious march to the North. After this he might say that the bitterness of death was past. The Virginia delegation in Congress passed a vote of want of confidence in the Government's conduct of the war. Mr. Seddon, considering his honor impugned, and being not unwilling to lay down a thankless task, resigned his post of Secretary of War. Mr. Davis at first wished him to reconsider his action, claiming that such a declaration from Congressmen was beyond their functions and subversive of the President's constitutional jurisdiction; but Mr. Seddon insisted, and General John C. Breckinridge was appointed in his place in February, for the few weeks that remained before the final crash. Warnings of serious demoralization came daily from the army; even that firm support to the revolt seemed crumbling. Disaffection was so rife in official circles in Richmond that it was not thought politic to call public atten-

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Pollard, "The Lost Cause," p. 653.

CHAP. VIII. tion to it by repression. A detective reported a Member of Congress as uttering treasonable language, and for his pains was told at the War Department that matters of that sort were none of his business.

Jones, "A Rebel War Clerk's Diary," Vol. II., p. 390.

It is a curious and instructive thing to note how the act of emancipation had by this time virtually enforced itself in Richmond. The value of slave property was gone. It is true that a slave was still occasionally sold, at a price less than one-tenth of what he would have brought before the war. But servants could be hired of their nominal owners at a barley-corn rate; six dollars in gold would pay the hire of a good cook for a year — merely enough to keep up the show of vassalage. In effect any one could hire a negro for his keeping, which was all that anybody in Richmond got for his work. Even Mr. Davis had at last become docile to the stern teachings of events. In his message of November he had recommended the employment of 40,000 slaves in the army,— not as soldiers it is true, save in the last extremity,— with emancipation to come later.

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The determined buoyancy and fanfaronade of the rebel department of State had finally given way. On the 27th of December Mr. Benjamin wrote his last important instruction to John Slidell. It is nothing less than a cry of despair. He recounts the courage and fortitude with which the South has withstood for four years the attack of "an arrogant and domineering race, vengeful, grasping, and ambitious"; the very adjectives show a vast change from the Southern tone of former years. He complains bitterly of the attitude of foreign

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nations while the South is fighting the battles of England and France against the North; he asks with agonized earnestness what it is they want. "Are they determined never to recognize the Southern Confederacy until the United States assent to such action on their part? Do they propose under any circumstances to give other and more direct aid to the Northern people in attempting to enforce our submission to a hateful Union? If so, it is but just that we be apprized of their purposes, to the end that we may then deliberately consider the terms, if any, upon which we can secure peace from the foes to whom the question is thus surrendered, and who have the countenance and encouragement of all mankind in the invasion of our country, the destruction of our homes, the extermination of our people." CHAP. VIII.

Benjamin to Slidell, Dec. 27, 1864 MS., Confederate Archives.

If, on the other hand, he continues, there be any conditions under which England and France will be willing to grant recognition, a frank exposition of such conditions "is due to humanity. It is due now, for it may enable us to save many lives most precious to our country, by consenting to such terms in advance of another year's campaign." With this alternative,—with the frantic offer to submit to any terms which Europe may impose as the price of recognition, and with the scarcely veiled threat of making peace with the North unless Europe should speedily act—the Confederate Department of State closed its four years of fruitless activity.

Ibid.

Lee assumed command of all the Confederate forces on the 9th day of February. His situation was one of unprecedented gloom. The day before,

Long, "Memoirs of R. E. Lee," p. 679.

CHAP. VIII. Feb. 8, 1865.

he had reported to Richmond that his troops, who had been in line of battle for two days at Hatcher's Run, exposed to the bitter winter weather, had been without meat for three days. "If some change is not made," he said, "and the commissary department reorganized, I apprehend dire results; . . . you must not be surprised if calamity befalls us." Mr. Davis indorsed this discouraging dispatch with words of anger and command easy to write: "This is too sad to be patiently considered; . . . criminal neglect or gross incapacity. . . Let supplies be had by purchase or borrowing." A prodigious effort was made, and the danger of starvation for the moment averted, but no permanent improvement resulted in the situation of affairs. The armies of the Union were closing in from every point of the compass. Grant was every day pushing his formidable left wing nearer the only roads by which Lee could escape; Thomas was threatening the Confederate communications from Tennessee; Sheridan was moving for the last time up the Valley of the Shenandoah to abolish Early; while from the South the redoubtable columns of Sherman — the men who had taken Vicksburg, who had scaled the heights of Chattanooga, and, having marched through Georgia, had left Savannah loyal and Charleston evacuated — were moving northward with the steady pace and irresistible progress of a tragic fate. It was the approach of this portent which affected the nerves of the Confederate leaders more than the familiar proximity of Grant. Beauregard, and afterwards Johnston, were ordered to "destroy Sherman." Beauregard, after his kind, showed his Government its duty in loud and valiant

Long, "Memoirs of R. E. Lee," pp. 678, 679.

Breckinridge to Lee, Feb. 21, 1865.

words. He advised Mr. Davis to send him at once heavy reënforcements "to give the enemy battle and crush him"; "then to concentrate all forces against Grant, march to Washington and dictate a peace"—a plan of limpid simplicity, which was not adopted. Johnston superseded the brilliant Louisianian the next day, and thereafter did what he could—with the scraps and remnants of an army allowed him—to resist the irresistible. CHAP. VIII. 1865.

A singular and significant attempt at negotiations was made at this time by General Lee. He was now so strong in the confidence of the people of the South, and the Government at Richmond was so rapidly becoming discredited, that he could doubtless have obtained the popular support, and compelled the assent of the Executive to any measures he thought proper for the attainment of peace. From this it was easy for him and for others to come to the wholly erroneous conclusion that General Grant held a similar relation to the Government and people of the United States. General Lee seized upon the pretext of a conversation reported to him by General Longstreet, as having been held with General E. O. C. Ord under an ordinary flag of truce for exchange of prisoners, to address a letter to Grant, sanctioned by Mr. Davis, saying he had been informed that General Ord had said that General Grant would not decline an interview with a view to "a satisfactory adjustment of the present unhappy difficulties by means of a military convention," providing Lee had authority to act. He therefore proposed to meet General Grant, "with the hope that upon an interchange of views it may be found practicable to submit the subjects of con- Lee to Grant, Mar. 2, 1865.

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troversy between the belligerents to a convention of the kind mentioned." In such event he said he was "authorized to do whatever the result of the proposed interview may render necessary or advisable."

Badeau, "Military History of U. S. Grant." Vol. III., pp. 400, 401.

Grant at once telegraphed these overtures to Washington. Stanton received his dispatch at the Capitol, where the President was, according to his custom, passing the last night of the session for the convenience of signing bills. The Secretary handed the telegram to Mr. Lincoln, who read it in silence. He asked no advice or suggestion from any one about him, but taking a pen, wrote with his usual slowness and precision a dispatch in Stanton's name, which he showed to Seward and then handed to Stanton to be signed, dated, and sent. The language is that of an experienced ruler, perfectly sure of himself and of his duty:

Mar. 3, 1865.

The President directs me to say that he wishes you to have no conference with General Lee unless it be for capitulation of General Lee's army, or on some minor or purely military matter. He instructs me to say that you are not to decide, discuss, or confer upon any political questions. Such questions the President holds in his own hands, and will submit them to no military conferences or conventions. Meanwhile you are to press to the utmost your military advantages.

Badeau, "Military History of U. S. Grant." Vol. III., pp. 401, 402.

General Grant, on the receipt of this instruction, wrote, in answer to General Lee, that he had no authority to accede to his proposition — such authority being vested in the President of the United States alone; he further explained that General Ord's language must have been misunderstood. Grant reported to Washingtor what he had done, adding that he would in no case exceed his author-

ity, or omit to press all advantages to the utmost of his ability. This closed the last avenue of hope to the Confederate authorities of any compromise by which the dread alternative of utter defeat or unconditional surrender might be avoided.[1] CHAP. VIII.

Early in March General Lee came to Richmond and had a conference with Mr. Davis on the measures to be adopted in the crisis which he saw was imminent. The General-in-Chief had not taken his advancement seriously. He had not sympathized in the slight which it involved towards the civil government; he had positively refused to assume the dictatorial powers with which the Richmond Congress had clearly intended to invest him; he had ostentatiously thanked "the President alone" for a promotion which in reality came from the President's enemies and critics. He continued to the end, in accordance with the constitution of the Confederate States, to treat Mr. Davis as the Commander-in-Chief of the forces. He now laid before him the terrible facts by which the army was environed: Richmond and Petersburg must be evacuated before many days; a new seat for the Confederate Government, a new base of defense for the armies must be taken up farther south and west. 1865.

There is a direct contradiction between Mr. Davis and the friends of General Lee as to the

[1] Jefferson Davis refers to this incident in his message of March 13 to the Confederate Congress, and says: "It thus appears, that neither with the Confederate authorities, nor the authorities of any State, nor through the commanding generals, will the Government of the United States treat or make any terms or agreement whatever for the cessation of hostilities. There remains then for us no choice but to continue this contest to a final issue"; etc.— "Annual Cyclopædia, 1865," p. 719.

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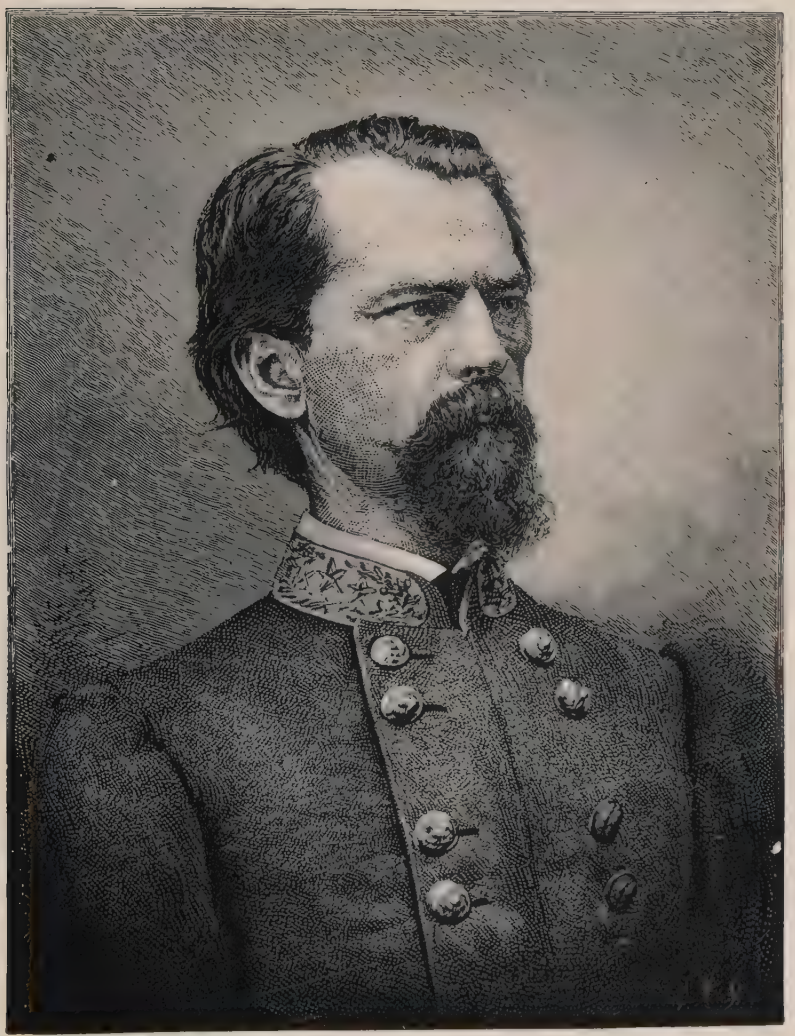
manner in which the former received this communication. Mr. Davis says he suggested an immediate withdrawal, but that General Lee said his horses were too weak for the roads in their present state, and that he must wait till the ground became firmer. But General Long, who gives General Lee as his authority, says that the President overruled the general; that Lee wanted then to withdraw his forces and take up a line behind the Staunton River, from which point he might have indefinitely protracted the war. However this may be, they were both agreed that sooner or later the Richmond lines must be abandoned; that the next move should be to Danville; that a junction was to be formed with Johnston; Sherman was to be destroyed; a swarm of recruits would come in after this victory; and Grant, being caught away from his base, was to be defeated and Virginia delivered from the invader. Mr. Davis gravely set forth this programme as his own, in his book written sixteen years after the war.

Davis, "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government," Vol. II., p. 648.

Long, "Memoirs of R. E. Lee," p. 403.

"Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government," Vol. II., pp. 648, 649.

But before he turned his back forever upon those lines he had so stoutly defended, before he gave up to the nation the capital of the State for whose sake he had deserted his flag, Lee resolved to dash once more at the toils by which he was surrounded. He placed half his army under the command of General John B. Gordon, with orders to break through the Union lines at Fort Stedman, and to take possession of the high ground behind them. The reticence in which General Lee enveloped himself in his last years has left his closest friends in doubt as to his real object in this apparently desperate enterprise. General Gordon, who takes



GENERAL JOHN B. GORDON.

to himself the greater share of responsibility for the plan, says: "I decided that Fort Stedman could be taken by a night assault, and that it might be possible to throw into the breach thus made in Grant's lines a sufficient force to disorganize and destroy the left wing of his army before he could recover and concentrate his forces." CHAP. VIII. Gordon to Davis, "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government," pp. 650, 651.

It is certainly true that any fort can be taken, by day or night, if the assaulting party has men enough and is willing to pay the price; but to take a place which cannot be held is not what we expect from a wise and experienced general. Grant had, with singular prescience, looked for some such movement from Lee a month before. He had ordered Parke, then in command of the Ninth Corps, to be ready to meet an assault on his center and to let his commanders understand they were to lose no time in bringing all their resources to bear on the point of danger. "With proper alacrity in this respect," he adds, "I would have no objection to seeing the enemy get through." This is one of the most characteristic phrases we have met with in Grant's orders. It throws the strongest light both on his temperament and on the mastery of his business at which he had arrived. A month beforehand he foresaw Gordon's attack, prepared for it, and welcomed the momentary success which attended it. Under such generalship an army's lines are a trap into which entrance is suicide. Feb. 22, 1865.

The assault was made with great spirit at half-past four on the morning of the 25th of March. Its initial success was due to a singular cause. The opposing lines at the point chosen were only 150 yards apart; the pickets were only fifty yards from

CHAP. VIII. each other; it was therefore a favorite point of departure for those Confederates who were tired of the war. Desertions had of late become very numerous and had naturally been encouraged in every way; orders had been issued allowing deserters to bring their arms with them. When
Mar. 25, 1865. Gordon's skirmishers came stealing through the darkness they were at first mistaken for an unusually large batch of deserters, and they overpowered several picket posts without a shot being fired. The storming party at once followed, took the trenches with a rush, and in a few minutes had possession of the main line on the right of Stedman. Turning on the fort, they soon drove out the garrison or made them prisoners. It was the dark hour before dawn, and the defense could not distinguish friends from foes; for a little while General Parke, who acted with his usual vigor and intelligence, was unable to make headway against the invisible enemy who swarmed on both sides of the breach in the lines. General N. B. McLaughlen, who was posted to the left of Fort Stedman, at once got to work and recaptured an outlying battery with the bayonet, and then hurrying into the fort in ignorance of its capture was made prisoner.

As soon as it was light, Parke's troops advanced from every direction to mend the breach; R. B. Potter on the left, Willcox on the right, and John F. Hartranft, who had been held in reserve, attacking directly from the high ground in the rear. The last two, between them, first made short work of the Confederate detachments that were moving on the City Point road and telegraph and searching in vain for three forts in the rear of Stedman which they

had been ordered to take; there were no such forts Humphreys says, where Gordon thought they were; the forts commanding Stedman were part of the main line. By half-past seven Parke had his task well in hand. He had repulsed the Confederate attack to the right and left of Fort Stedman, recaptured two of the detached batteries, forced the enemy with heavy loss back into the fort, and concentrated upon them a heavy artillery fire from three sides. The artillery under the direction of General J. C. Tidball worked with splendid energy and precision. Hartranft's division carried Fort Stedman by assault, and Gordon withdrew to the Confederate lines what he was able to save of his attacking force. The cross fire of artillery was now so withering that few of the Confederates could get back, and none could come to their assistance. General Parke captured 1949 prisoners, including seventy-one officers and nine stands of colors; his own total loss was about 1000.

Humphreys, "The Virginia Campaign of '64 and '65," p. 317.

Mar. 25, 1865.

But this heavy loss was not the only damage the Confederates suffered. Humphreys and Wright, in command of the troops on the Union left, who were to be routed and dispersed according to General Lee's plan, on being informed of the racket in the center, correctly assuming that Parke could take care of himself, instantly searched the lines in their front to see if they had been essentially weakened to support Gordon's attack. They found they had not; but in the process of gaining this information they captured the enemy's intrenched picket lines in front of them, which, in spite of repeated attempts to regain them, were firmly held, and gave inestimable advantage to the Union army

CHAP VIII. in the struggle of the next week. The net results therefore to General Lee of the day's work were a bitter disappointment, a squandering of four thousand of his best troops against half that number on the other side, and the loss of his intrenched picket line, which brought such dangerous neighbors as Wright and Humphreys within arm's-length of him.

For several weeks General Grant's chief anxiety had been lest Lee should abandon his lines. At first he feared a concentration of Lee and Johnston against Sherman; but when the victorious Army of the West had arrived at Goldsboro' and formed connection with Schofield his anxiety on that score was at rest, and there only remained a keen eagerness to make an end of the Army of Northern Virginia. "I was afraid," he says, "every morning that I would awake from my sleep to hear that Lee had gone, and that nothing was left but a picket line." Still — just as Lee, though feeling every hour of waiting was fraught with danger, was prevented from moving by the bad roads and the Richmond complications — Grant, although burning to attack, was delayed by the same cause of bad roads, and by another. He did not wish to move until Sheridan had completed the work assigned him in the Valley and joined either Sherman or the army at Petersburg.

Grant, "Personal Memoirs." Vol. II., p. 424.

But at last, satisfied with Sheridan's progress and with Sherman's condition, he resolved to wait
1865. no longer, and on the 24th of March, at the very moment when Gordon was making his arrangements for the next day's sortie, Grant issued his order for the great movement to the left which was

to finish the war. He intended to begin on the 29th, but Lee's desperate dash of the 25th appeared to the Union commander to indicate an intention to secure a wider opening to the Danville road to facilitate an immediate move of the Confederates westward, and he felt more than ever that not a moment was to be lost. Sheridan reached City Point on the 26th, and Sherman came up from North Carolina for a brief visit the next day. He said he would be ready to move on the 10th of April, and laid before Grant a plan for a coöperative campaign, which was of course satisfactory, as was usually everything that Sherman proposed, but which the swift rush of events soon rendered superfluous. The President was also there, and an interesting conversation took place between these famous brothers-in-arms and Mr. Lincoln, after which Sherman went back to Goldsboro' and Grant began pushing his army to the left with even more than his usual iron energy.

CHAP. VIII. March, 1865.

It was a great army; it was the result of all the power and wisdom of the Government, all the devotion of the people, all the intelligence and teachableness of the soldiers themselves, and all the ability and character which the experience of a mighty war had developed in the officers. Few nations have produced better corps commanders than Sheridan, Warren, Humphreys, Ord, Wright, and Parke, taking their names as they come in the vast sweep of the Union lines from Dinwiddie Court House to the James in the last days of March; north of the James was Weitzel, vigilant and capable. Between Grant and the Army of the Potomac was Meade, the incarnation of industry,

1865.

CHAP. VIII. zeal, and talent; and in command of all was Grant, then in his best days, the most extraordinary military temperament this country has ever seen. When unfriendly criticism has exhausted itself, the fact remains, not to be explained away by any reasoning, subtle or gross, that in this tremendous war he accomplished more with the means given him than any other two on either side. The means given him were enormous, the support of the Government was intelligent and untiring; but others had received the same means and the same support — and he alone captured three armies. The popular instinct which hails him as our greatest general is correct; and the dilettante critics who write ingenious arguments to prove that one or another of his subordinates or his adversaries was his superior will please for a time their diminishing coteries, and then pass into silence without damaging his robust fame.

The numbers of the respective armies in this last grapple have been the occasion of endless controversy. We take the figures given by General Humphreys — not merely on account of his profound study of the subject and personal acquaintance with it, but because we consider him the most thoroughly candid and impartial man who has written the history of this army. The effective force of infantry of the Army of the Potomac was 69,000; of field artillery, 6000, with 243 guns. The effective force of infantry of the Army of the James was 32,000; of field artillery, 3000, with 126 guns, and 1700 cavalry, though General Ord took with him only about one-half his infantry; Sheridan's cavalrymen, present for duty, 13,000; the grand total

of all arms was 124,700. Lee's infantry numbered 46,000; his field artillery, 5000; his cavalry, 6000; in all, 57,000. CHAP. VIII.

Grant's plan, as announced in his instructions of March 24, was at first to dispatch Sheridan to reach and destroy the South Side and Danville railroads, at the same time moving a heavy force to the left, primarily to insure the success of Sheridan's raid,[1] and then to turn Lee's position. But his purpose grew and developed every hour, and before he had been a day away from his winter headquarters he had given up the comparatively narrow scheme with which he started and had adopted the far bolder and more comprehensive plan, which he carried out to his immortal honor. 1865. Grant, Report. "Personal Memoirs." Vol. II., p. 616.

It is probable that to General Sheridan belongs a part of the credit of this change of plan. He often said, in conversation with his friends, that he was delighted after his victory over Early at Waynesboro' to find such difficulties in crossing the James as prevented his going south to Sherman, and justified him — neglecting his alternative orders to return to Winchester — in turning east and uniting with the Army of the Potomac. He felt that the war was nearing its end and desired his cavalry to be in at the death. He thought it best that the Eastern army, which had thus far won scanty laurels when compared with the Western, should have the glory of this final victory; and when he arrived at City Point and found General Grant's plans once more contemplated the possi- Sheridan, "Memoirs." Vol. II., p. 119.

[1] Grant wrote to Sherman on March 22: "I shall start with no distinct view further than holding Lee's forces from following Sheridan. But I shall be along myself, and will take advantage of anything that turns up." Sherman, "Memoirs." Vol. II., p. 323.

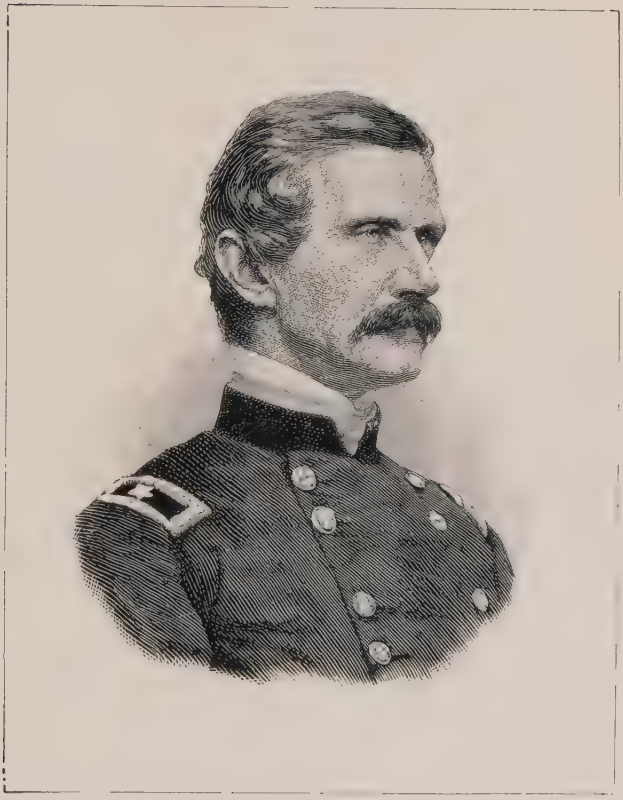
CHAP. VIII.

bility of sending his cavalry to Sherman and bringing that commander, after disposing of Johnston, to share in the destruction of Lee, Sheridan urged the General-in-Chief to finish the work immediately with the Army of the Potomac, that had so richly merited the glory which would come of the fruition of their long years of blood and toil. Grant seems to have assured Sheridan that his orders would not require him to go to Sherman except in a remote contingency, and that they had been prepared as a "blind" in case of failure. Both commanders were full of the spirit of victory. On the evening of the 29th of March, Sheridan's cavalry was at Dinwiddie Court House, and the left of the moving force of infantry extended to the Quaker road—almost to Lee's right flank on the White Oak Ridge. Grant's purpose had now taken complete shape in his mind. From his tent on Gravelly Creek he wrote to Sheridan, telling him the position of all his corps, and adding in simple words, which will stir the blood of every reader for ages to come, "I now feel like ending the matter . . . before going back." He ordered Sheridan not to cut loose and go after the railroads, but to push for the enemy's right rear. "We will act all together as one army here, until it is seen what can be done with the enemy."

Sheridan, "Memoirs." Vol. II., p. 128. Grant, "Personal Memoirs." Vol. II., p. 437.

Grant, Report, "Personal Memoirs." Vol. II., p. 621.

The next day Sheridan advanced to Five Forks, where he found a heavy force of the enemy. Lee, justly alarmed by Grant's movements, had drawn all his available troops out of the trenches, dispatched a sufficient force under Fitzhugh Lee to Five Forks to hold that important cross-roads, and had taken personal command of the rest on the



GENERAL A. A. HUMPHREYS.

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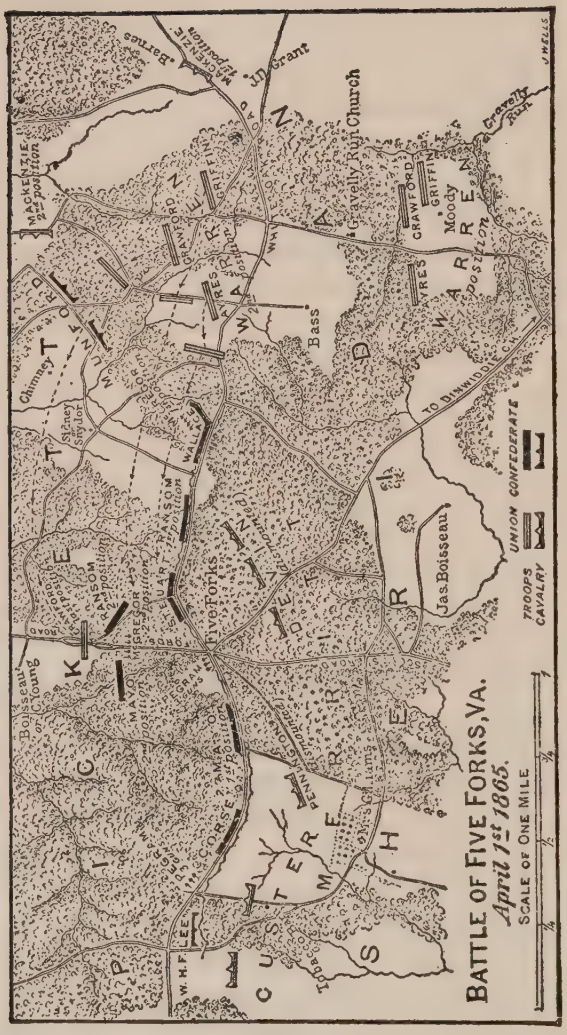
White Oak Ridge. A heavy storm of rain began the night of the 29th, continuing more than twenty-four hours, and greatly impeded the march of the troops. Warren, on the morning of the 31st, worked his way towards the White Oak road; but before he reached it Lee came out of his lines and attacked Warren's advanced division (Ayres's) with such impetus that it was driven back on the main line at Gravelly Run. There, gallantly supported by General Miles of Humphreys's corps, who made a spirited attack on Lee's left flank, Warren held his own, and in the afternoon moved forward and drove the enemy into his works. CHAP. VIII. March, 1865.

Lee, not satisfied with opposing Sheridan at Five Forks with cavalry, had, on the 30th, sent Pickett there with some 7000 infantry, which, with nearly an equal force of cavalry, was too much for the Union horse to handle. Sheridan was, therefore, on the 31st, forced back to Dinwiddie Court House. "Here," says Grant, "Sheridan displayed great generalship." He fought with obstinate tenacity, disputing every inch of ground, deploying his cavalry on foot, leaving only men enough with his horses to guard them. He gave Pickett and Lee a hard day's work on the way to Dinwiddie, and at night reported his situation to Grant in his usual tone of valorous confidence. Grant, indeed, was far more disturbed than Sheridan. He rained orders and suggestions all night upon Meade, Warren, and Sheridan, the purpose of which was to effect a concentration at daylight on that portion of the enemy in front of Sheridan. Warren, giving his troops, who had been marching and fighting for three days, a few hours' needed rest, came in on Sheridan's

Grant, Report, "Personal Memoirs." Vol. II., p. 621.


BATTLE OF FIVE FORKS, VA.
April 1st 1865.
SCALE OF ONE MILE
UNION
CONFEDERATE
TROOPS
CAVALRY
CUSTER
SHERIDAN
WARREN
DINWIDDIE C.H.
Gravelly Run
Jas. Boisseau
Bass
Chimney
Sheep Pasture
Boisseau
Young
Mayo
Lee
Pickett
Corse
Ramseur
Pegram
Wallace
Crawford
Griffin
Ayres
Bartlett
Gregg
Smith
Devin
Merritt
Custer
Fitzhugh Lee
Rosser
Munford
Wickham
Keyes
Stanton
Tyler
Pennington
Mackenzie
Bartlett
Gen. Grant
Crawford
Griffin
Ayres
Moody
Gravelly Run
Jas. Boisseau
To Dinwiddie C.H.
J. WELLS

right about dawn. But Pickett, seeing that he was out of position, did not wait to be caught between the two Union columns; he withdrew noiselessly during the night[1] and resumed his strongly intrenched post at Five Forks. Grant, in ignorance of this timely flight of Pickett, was greatly incensed at Warren for not having done what is now seen to have been impossible to do, since Pickett was gone before the hour when Grant wished Warren to attack him. The long-smoldering dislike of Warren, which had been for months increasing in Grant's mind, now blazed out into active hostility, and he sent an aide-de-camp to Sheridan, suggesting that Warren be relieved from his command.[2] CHAP. VIII. Mar.31,1865.

Sheridan hurried up to Five Forks with his cavalry, leaving Warren to bring up the Fifth Corps. Filled, as Sheridan was all this day, with the most intense martial ardor, his judgment and control of his troops were never more powerful and comprehensive. He pressed with his cavalry the retreating Confederates until they came to Five Forks, and then assigned to Merritt the duty of demon-

[1] The testimony of the Confederate generals in the Warren court of inquiry shows that Pickett and Fitzhugh Lee, anticipating Warren's arrival at daybreak, resolved to retire at ten o'clock on the night of the 31st of March, and that the movement began at once. "Nearly everything on wheels," Fitzhugh Lee said, "was away by midnight." At daylight the cavalry moved, covering the rear of the infantry.—Warren Court of Inquiry, p. 469. General W. H. F. Lee's testimony is to the same effect, p. 536.

[2] Thorough inquiry among the friends of both generals seems to establish the fact that Grant's animosity towards Warren arose from the habit Warren had of discussing his orders, suggesting changes in plans of battle, and movements in support of his own. Grant regarded this habit as lacking in respect to himself, and although Warren was looked upon as one of the ablest and most devoted officers in the army, it was evident that sooner or later Grant's irritation would come to a point which would prove ruinous to Warren.

CHAP. VIII. strating strongly on Pickett's right, while with the infantry of the Fifth Corps he was to strike the left flank, which ran along the White Oak road about three-quarters of a mile east from Five Forks and then made a return of a hundred yards to the north, perpendicular to the road. It was the old tactics of the Valley repeated, with the additional advantage in this case that, if successful, he would drive Pickett westward and cut him off from Lee. To guard against any interruption from the east R. S. Mackenzie had been sent to take possession of the White Oak road, some three miles east of the Forks, a task which he promptly performed, and then came back to take his position on the right of the Fifth Corps.

April 1, 1865. The battle was fought almost as it was planned: the only difference between conception and execution arose from the fact that it had not been practicable to ascertain the precise position of the enemy's left flank, lest the attempt might put them on their guard. Ayres's division was on the left, Crawford on the right, Griffin behind Crawford, and in this way they moved to the attack about four o'clock. Warren, understanding that the enemy's lines reached farther down the road than was the case, sent Ayres, his smallest division, in a direction which brought it against the angle, and Crawford and Griffin were moving across the road and altogether past the left of the enemy into the woods, when the heavy firing in front of Ayres warned Warren of his error, and he immediately bestirred himself to rectify it, sending his aides in every direction, and finally riding off into the woods to bring back Crawford and Griffin to the point

where they were so greatly needed. All this occupied considerable time, and in the mean while the brunt of the battle fell upon Ayres's division. They were hardly strong enough for the work thus accidentally assigned them, and there might have been a serious check at that moment but for the providential presence of Sheridan himself, who, with a fury and vehemence founded on the soundest judgment, personally led the troops in their attack on the intrenchments. Those who saw him that day will tell the story to their latest breath, how, holding the colors in his hand, with a face darkened with smoke and anger, and with sharp exhortations that rang like pistol-shots, he gathered up the faltering battalions of Ayres and swept like a spring gust over Pickett's breastworks. CHAP. VIII. Apl. 1, 1865.

Meanwhile Warren was doing similar work on the right. He had at last succeeded in giving his other two divisions the right direction, and came in on the reverse of the enemy's lines. At one moment, finding some hesitation in a part of Crawford's force, "Warren, riding forward," says Humphreys, "with the corps flag in his hand, led his troops across the field." His horse was shot dead in the final charge. The dusk of evening came down on one of the most complete and momentous victories of the war. Pickett was absolutely routed; every man was driven from the field except the killed and wounded, and the prisoners, who were gathered in to the number of some five thousand, with a great quantity of guns and colors. As the battle was ending, Sheridan sent an order to Warren relieving him of his command and directing him to report to General Grant for orders.

CHAP. VIII. It does not come within the compass of this work to review all the circumstances which led General Grant to entertain so rooted a dislike to Warren, and General Sheridan, who had but a slight acquaintance with him,[1] to adopt his chief's opinions. In removing him from command they were perfectly justified. Honestly holding the opinion they held of him, it was their duty to prevent the evils they thought might result from his retention in so important a trust. But it is not improper here to say that a court of inquiry, which General Warren succeeded in obtaining after General Grant had for twelve years denied it to him, decided that the impressions under which Grant and Sheridan acted were erroneous, and that Warren did his whole duty at Five Forks. Grant never changed his opinion of him. It is true he offered him another command the next day, and soon afterwards he was given an important department to administer; but the General-in-Chief was always implacable towards him. Even in his "Memoirs," in the midst of the compliments he pays to the memory of Warren, he shows his increasing prejudice in one phrase. In his report of 1865 he said Warren was relieved "about the close of this battle"; in
p. 444. his "Memoirs" he says "the troops were then brought up and the assault successfully made"—*after* Warren was relieved.

[1] "As we had never been thrown much together, I knew but little of him."—Sheridan, "Memoirs." Vol. II., p. 168.

CHAPTER IX

APPOMATTOX

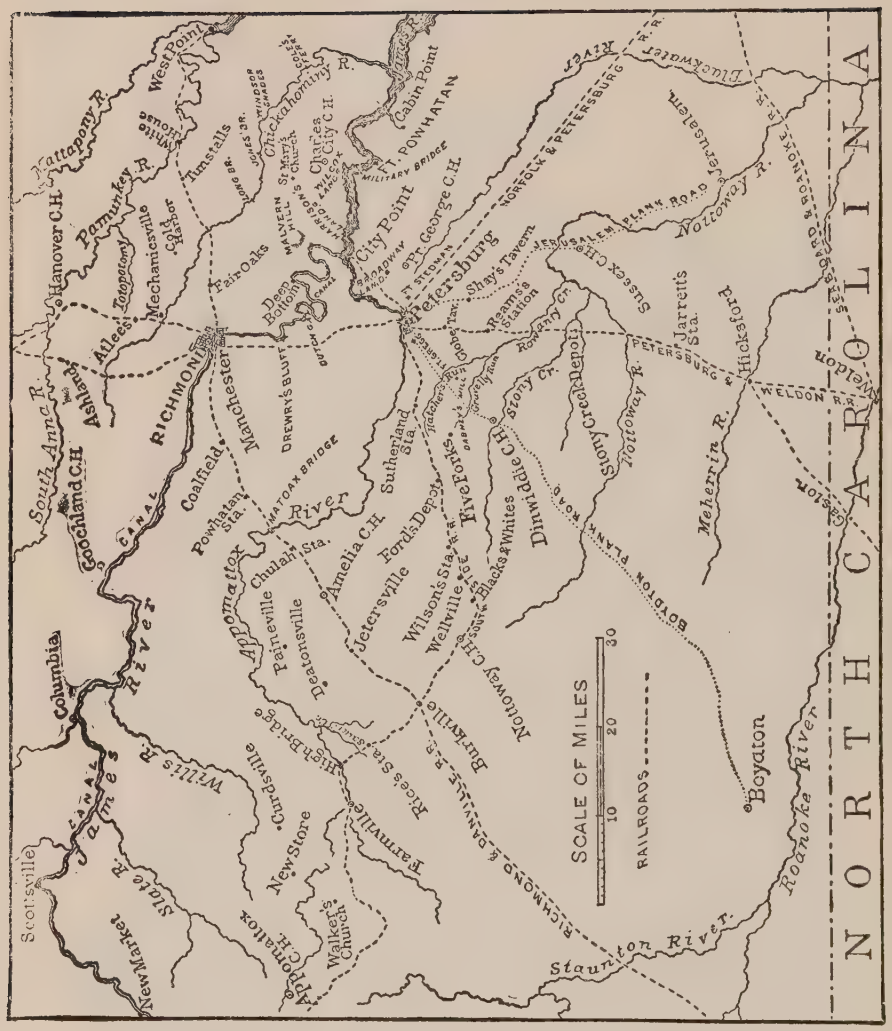
THE battle of Five Forks ought to have ended the war: Lee's right had been shattered and routed; his line, as he had long predicted, had been stretched westward until it broke; there was no longer any hope of saving Richmond, or even of materially delaying its fall. But General Lee apparently thought that even the gain of a day was of value to the Richmond Government, and what was left of the Army of Northern Virginia was still so perfect in discipline and obedience that it answered with unabated spirit and courage every demand made upon it. It is painful to record or to read the story of the hard fighting of the 2d of April; every drop of blood spent on the lines of Petersburg that day seems to have been shed in vain.

1865.

Parke and Wright had been ordered on the 30th of March to examine the enemy's works in their respective fronts with a view to determine whether it was practicable to carry them by assault; they had both reported favorably. After the great victory of Five Forks, Grant, whose anxiety for Sheridan seems excessive, thought that Lee would reënforce against him heavily,[1] when, in fact Lee

Badeau, "Military History of U. S. Grant." Vol. III., p. 503.

[1] Grant to Ord: "I have just heard from Sheridan. . . Everything the enemy has will probably be pushed against him."



FROM PETERSBURG TO APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE.

GENERAL CHARLES GRIFFIN.

had already sent to his right all the troops that could be spared, and Sheridan had routed them. To relieve Sheridan and to take advantage of any weakness in Lee's extended front, Grant now ordered an assault all along the lines. The answers came in with electric swiftness and confidence: Wright said he would "make the fur fly"; Ord promised to go into the Confederate lines "like a hot knife into butter." The ground, however, in front of Ord was so difficult that Grant gave him no positive orders to assault, but, on the contrary, enjoined upon him great vigilance and caution. Similar instructions were given to Humphreys; Miles, of his corps, was ordered westward on the White Oak road to help Sheridan, and Wright and Parke were directed to attack at four o'clock on the morning of the 2d. Grant's principal anxiety was lest Lee should get away from Petersburg and overwhelm Sheridan on the White Oak road. Lee was thinking of nothing of the kind. The terrible blow his right had received seemed to have stunned him. He waited, with a fortitude not far from despair, for the attack which the morning was sure to bring, making what hasty preparations were in his power for the coming storm. CHAP. IX. April, 1865.

It came with the first glimmer of dawn. Wright, who had carefully studied the ground in his front, from the safe point of vantage he had gained the day of Gordon's ill-fated sortie, had selected the open space in front of Forts Fisher and Walsh as the weak point in the Confederate harness. Not that it was really weak, except in comparison with the almost impregnable works to right and left: the enemy's front was intersected by marshy rivulets;

CHAP. IX. a heavy abatis had to be cut away under musketry fire from the parapets and a rain of artillery from the batteries. It was a quarter to five before there
Apl. 2, 1865. was light enough to guide the storming columns; but at that instant they swarmed forward, rushing over the Confederate pickets with too much momentum to be delayed a minute, and, gaining the main works, made them their own after a brief but murderous conflict. In fifteen minutes Wright lost eleven hundred men. They wasted not an instant after this immense success. Some pushed on in the ardor of the assault across the Boydton road as far the South Side Railroad; the gallant Confederate general A. P. Hill rode unawares upon a squad of these skirmishers, and, refusing to surrender, lost his life at their hands. But the main body of the troops wisely improved their victory. A portion of them worked resolutely to the right, meeting strong resistance from the Confederates under Wilcox; the larger part re-formed with the celerity that comes from discipline and experience, and moved down the reverse of the captured lines to Hatcher's Run, where, about seven o'clock, having swept everything before them and made large captures of men and guns, they met their comrades of the Twenty-fourth Corps, whom they joined, facing about and marching over ground cleared of the enemy till the left closed in on the Appomattox River.

Humphreys, "The Virginia Campaign of '64 and '65," p. 365.

Parke also assaulted at the earliest light, meeting with a success on the outer line equally brilliant and important, capturing four hundred yards of intrenchments with many guns, colors, and prisoners. But there was in front of him an interior line,

heavily fortified, and here the enemy, under General Gordon, not only made a stand, but resumed the offensive and assaulted several times during the day, without success, the lines which Parke had seized in the morning and hastily reversed. On the left Humphreys displayed his usual intelligent energy; as soon as he heard of the success of Wright and Parke, on his right, he attacked with Hays's division the Confederate redoubt at Crow's house, capturing the works, the guns, and most of the garrison, while upon his left Mott's division drove the enemy out of their works at Burgess's Mill. Humphreys wanted to concentrate his whole corps against the scattered enemy by the Claiborne road; but General Meade countermanded the movement. Mott and Hays were ordered towards Petersburg, and Miles, who had been holding the White Oak road for Sheridan, was therefore left alone to deal with Heth's division, which had hastily intrenched itself near Sutherland's Station, and here a sharp fight took place. Miles, twice repulsed, stuck obstinately to his task, and about three o'clock whipped and dislodged the enemy, making large captures, and driving him off towards the Appomattox and Amelia Court House.

CHAP. IX.

Apl. 2, 1865.

Two forts—Gregg and Whitworth—on the main line of the Confederate intrenchments west of Petersburg made a stout resistance to the National troops. The former was a very strong work, surrounded by a deep and wide wet ditch, flanked by fire to the right and left. It was an ugly thing to handle, but Robert S. Foster's and J. W. Turner's divisions of Gibbon's corps assaulted with unflinching valor, meeting a desperate resistance. Every

CHAP. IX. advantage, except that of numbers, was on the side of its brave defenders, and they put twice their own numbers *hors du combat* before they surrendered. Gibbon reports a loss of 714 killed and
Apl. 2, 1865. wounded; 55 Confederate dead were found in the work. After Gregg had fallen, Turner's men made short work of Fort Whitworth, and the Confederates, from the Appomattox to the Weldon road, fell slowly back to their inner line of works near Petersburg, now garrisoned by Longstreet's troops, who had come in from the north side of the James.

The attack of Wright, though it must have been anticipated, came upon General Lee with the stunning effect of lightning. Before the advance of the National army had been reported to Lee or A. P. Hill, they saw squads of men in blue scattered about
W. H. Taylor, "Four Years with General Lee," p. 149. the Boydton road, and it was in riding forward to ascertain what the strange apparition meant that General Hill lost his life. General Lee, in full uniform, with his dress sword, which he seldom wore, but which he had put on that morning in honor of the momentous day he saw coming, — being determined with that chivalrous spirit of his to receive adversity splendidly, — watched from the lawn in front of his headquarters the formidable advance of the National troops before whom his weakened
J. E. Cooke, "Life of R. E. Lee," p. 447. lines were breaking into spray, and then, mounting his iron-gray charger, slowly rode back to his inner line. There his ragged troops received him with shouts and cheers, which showed there was plenty of fight left in them; and there he spent the day in making preparations for the evacuation which was now the only resort left him. He sent a dispatch to Richmond, carrying in brief and simple words

the message of despair to the Confederate authorities: "I see no prospect of doing more than holding our position here till night. I am not certain I can do that." He succinctly stated the disaster that had befallen him, announced his purpose of concentrating on the Danville road, and advised that all preparations be made for leaving Richmond that night.

Long, "Memoirs of R. E. Lee," p 691.

Apl. 2, 1865

Some Confederate writers express surprise that General Grant did not attack and destroy Lee's army on the afternoon of the 2d of April; but this is a view, after the fact, easy to express. Wright's and Humphreys's troops on the Union left had been on foot for eighteen hours; they had fought an important battle, marched and countermarched many miles, and were now confronted by Longstreet's fresh corps, behind formidable works, led by the best of Lee's generals; while the attitude of the force under Gordon, on the south side of the town, was such as to require the close attention of Parke. Grant, anticipating an early retirement of Lee from his citadel, wisely resolved to avoid the waste and bloodshed of an immediate assault on the inner lines at Petersburg. He ordered Sheridan to get upon Lee's line of retreat, sent Humphreys to strengthen him; then, directing a general bombardment for five o'clock the next morning, and an assault at six, he gave himself and his soldiers a little of the rest they had so richly earned, and which they so seriously needed, as a restorative after the labors past and a preparation for the labors to come.

He had telegraphed during the day to President Lincoln, who was at City Point, the great day's

CHAP. IX. news as it developed hour by hour. He was particularly happy at the large captures. "How many prisoners?" was always the first question as an aide-de-camp came galloping in with news of success. Prisoners he regarded as so much net gain: he was weary of slaughter; he wanted the war ended with the least bloodshed possible. It was with the greatest delight that he was able to telegraph on this Sunday afternoon, "The whole captures since the army started out gunning will not amount to less than twelve thousand men and probably fifty pieces of artillery."

Badeau, "Military History of U. S. Grant." Vol. III., p. 526.

General Lee, after the first shock of the breaking of his lines, soon recovered his usual *sang froid*, and bent all his energies to saving his army and leading it out of its untenable position on the James to a point from which he could effect a junction with Johnston in North Carolina. The place selected for this purpose was Burkeville, at the crossing of the South Side and Danville roads, fifty miles from Richmond, whence a short distance would bring him to Danville, where the desired junction might be made. Even in this ruin of the Confederacy, when the organized revolt which he had sustained so long with the bayonets of his soldiers was crashing about his ears, he was able still to cradle himself in the illusion that it was only a campaign that had failed; that he might withdraw his troops, form a junction with Johnston, and continue the war indefinitely in another field. Whatever we may think of his judgment, it is impossible not to admire the coolness of a general who, in the midst of irremediable disaster such as encompassed Lee

1865. on the afternoon of the 2d of April, could write

such a letter as he wrote to Jefferson Davis under date of three o'clock. He began it by a quiet and calm discussion of the question of negro recruitment; promised to give his attention to the business of finding suitable officers for the black regiments; hoped the appeal Mr. Davis had made to the governors would have a good effect; and, altogether, wrote as if years of struggle and effort were before him and his chief. He then went on to narrate the story of the day's catastrophe and to give his plans for the future. He closed by apologizing for writing "such a hurried letter to your Excellency," on the ground that he was "in the presence of the enemy, endeavoring to resist his advance."

CHAP. IX.

Apl. 2, 1865.

Davis, "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government." Vol. II., pp. 660, 661.

At nightfall all his preparations were completed. He mounted his horse, and riding out of the town dismounted at the mouth of the road leading to Amelia Court House, the first point of rendezvous, where he had directed supplies to be sent, and standing beside his horse, the bridle reins in his hand, he watched his troops file noiselessly by in the darkness. At three o'clock the town, which had been so long and so stoutly defended, was abandoned; only a thin line of skirmishers was left in front of Parke, and before daybreak he pierced the line in several places, gathering in the few pickets that were left. The town was formally surrendered to Colonel Ralph Ely at half-past four, anticipating the capitulation which some one else offered to General Wright a few minutes later. Meade reported the news to Grant, and received the order to march his army immediately up the Appomattox by the river road; Grant, divining the intentions of Lee, dispatched an of-

Apl. 3, 1865.

CHAP. IX. ficer to Sheridan, directing him to push with all speed to the Danville road with Humphreys and Griffin and all the cavalry.

Thus the flight and the pursuit began almost at the same moment. The swift-footed Army of Northern Virginia was now racing for its life; and Grant, inspired with more than his habitual tenacity and energy, and thoroughly aroused to the tremendous task of ending the war at once, not only pressed his enemy in the rear, but hung upon his flank, and strained every nerve to get in his front. It is characteristic of him that he did not even allow himself the pleasure of entering Richmond, which, deserted by those who had so often promised to protect it, and wrapped in flames lighted by the reckless hands of Confederate officials, surrendered
April, 1865. to Weitzel early on the morning of the 3d.

All that day Lee pushed forward towards Amelia Court House. He seemed in higher spirits than usual. As one who has long been dreading bankruptcy feels a great load taken from his mind when his assignment is made, so the Virginian chief, when he drew out from the ruin and conflagration in which the Confederate dream of independent power was passing away, and marched with his men into the vernal fields and woods of his native State, was filled with a new sense of encouragement and cheer. "I have got my army safe out of its breastworks," he said, "and in order to follow me the enemy must abandon his lines, and can
J. E. Cooke, "Life of R. E. Lee," p. 451. derive no further benefit from his railroads or James River." But he was now dealing with the man who, in Mississippi, had boldly swung loose from his base of supplies in an enemy's country, in

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face of an army equal to his own, and had won a victory a day without a wagon train. CHAP. IX.

There was little fighting the first day except among the cavalry. Custer attacked the Confederates at Namozine Church, and later in the day Merritt's cavalry had a sharp contest with Fitzhugh Lee at Deep Creek. On the 4th, Sheridan, who was aware of Lee's intention to concentrate at Amelia Court House, brought his cavalry with great speed to Jetersville, about eight miles southwest of the Court House, where Lee's army was resting. Sheridan intrenched, and sent tidings of his own and the enemy's position to Grant, and on the afternoon of the next day the Second and Sixth Corps came up. A terrible disappointment awaited General Lee on his arrival at Amelia Court House. He had ordered, he says, supplies to be forwarded there; but when his half-starved troops arrived on the 4th of April they found that no food had been sent to meet them, and nearly twenty-four hours were lost in collecting subsistence for men and horses. "This delay was fatal and could not be retrieved."[1] The whole pursuing force was south and stretching out to the west of him, when he started on the night of the 5th of April to make one more effort to reach a place of temporary safety. Burkeville, the junction of the Lynchburg

Apl. 5, 1865.

1865.

[1] Lee's report of the surrender (Long, "Memoirs of R. E. Lee," p. 693). Other Confederate writers insist that the train which should have borne these supplies to Lee was directed to Richmond to assist the flight of the Confederate authorities (Pollard, "Lost Cause," p. 703). Jefferson Davis ("Rise and Fall." Vol. II., p. 668) denounces the whole story as a malignant calumny, and gives voluminous statements from Confederate officers to confute it. But there seems no reason to doubt General Lee's statement, made to Mr. Davis in his report at the time.

CHAP. IX. and Danville roads, was in Grant's possession; the way to Danville was barred, and the supply of provisions from the south cut off. Lee was compelled to change his route to the west; and he now started for Lynchburg, which he was destined never to reach.

It had been Meade's intention to attack Lee at Amelia Court House on the morning of the 6th of
1865. April, but before he reached that place he discovered that Lee's westward march had already begun, and that the Confederates were well beyond the Union left. Meade quickly faced his army about and started in pursuit. A running fight ensued for fourteen miles; the enemy, with remarkable quickness and dexterity, halting and partly intrenching themselves from time to time, and the National forces driving them out of every position, moving so swiftly that lines of battle followed closely on the skirmish line. At several points the cavalry, on this and the preceding day, harassed the moving left flank of the Confederates and worked havoc on the trains, on one occasion causing a grievous loss to history by burning Lee's headquarters baggage with all its wealth of returns and reports. Sheridan and Meade pressed so closely at last that Ewell's corps was brought to bay at Sailor's Creek, a rivulet running northward into the Appomattox. Here an important battle, or rather series of battles, took place, with fatal results to Lee's fast-vanishing army. The Fifth Corps held the extreme right and was not engaged. Humphreys, coming to where the roads divided, took the right fork and drove Gordon down towards the mouth of the creek. A sharp battle was fought about

dark, which resulted in the total defeat of the Confederates, Humphreys capturing 1700 prisoners, 13 flags, 4 guns, and a large part of the main trains; Gordon making his escape in the night to High Bridge with what was left of his command. Wright, on the left-hand road, had also a keen fight, and won a most valuable victory. With Wheaton's and Seymour's divisions he attacked Ewell's corps, in position on the banks of the creek, enveloping him with the utmost swiftness and vehemence; Sheridan, whose cavalry had intercepted the Confederates, ordered Crook and Merritt to attack on the left, which was done with such vigor — Davies's horsemen riding over the enemy's breastworks at a single rush — that, smitten in front and flank, unable either to stand or to get away, Ewell's whole force was captured on the field. The day's loss was deadly to Lee, not less than eight thousand in all; among them such famous generals as Ewell, Kershaw, G. W. Custis Lee, M. D. Corse, and others were prisoners.

Humphreys, "The Virginia Campaign of '64 and '65," p. 381.

In the mean time Ord, under Sheridan's orders, had moved rapidly along the Lynchburg road to Rice's Station, where he found Longstreet's corps intrenched, and night came on before he could get into position to attack. General Theodore Read, Ord's chief-of-staff, had gone still farther forward with eighty horsemen and five hundred infantry to burn High Bridge, if possible. In the attempt to execute this intention he fell in, in the neighborhood of Farmville, with two divisions of Confederate cavalry under Rosser and T. T. Munford. One of the most gallant and pathetic battles of the war took place. General Read, Colonel Francis

Apl. 6, 1865.

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Washburn, and all the cavalry officers with Read were killed and the rest captured; the Confederate loss was also heavy. Read's generous self-sacrifice halted the Confederate army for several hours. Longstreet lost the day at Rice's Station waiting for Anderson, Ewell, and Gordon to unite with him. They were engaged in a fruitless attempt to save their trains, which resulted, as we have seen, in the almost total loss of the trains, in the capture of Ewell's entire force, and in the routing and shattering of the other commands. The day's work was of incalculable value to the National arms. Sheridan's unerring eye appreciated the full importance of it; his hasty report ended with the words, "If the thing is pressed, I think that Lee will surrender." Grant sent the dispatch to President Lincoln, who instantly replied, "Let the thing be pressed."

Humphreys, "The Virginia Campaign of '64 and '65," p. 385.

Badeau, "Military History of U. S. Grant." Vol. III., p. 581.

April, 1865.

In fact, after nightfall of the 6th Lee's army could only flutter like a wounded bird with one wing shattered; there was no longer any possibility of escape. Yet General Lee found it hard to relinquish the illusions of years, and his valiant heart still dreamed of evading the gathering toils and forming somewhere a junction with Johnston and indefinitely prolonging the war. As soon as night had come down on the disastrous field of Sailor's Creek, he again took up his weary march westward. Longstreet marched for Farmville, crossed to the north bank of the Appomattox, and on the 7th moved out on the road which ran through Appomattox Court House to Lynchburg. His famishing troops had found provisions at Farmville, and with this refreshment marched with such celerity

that Grant and Sheridan, with all the energy they could breathe into their subordinates, could not head them off, or bring them to decisive battle that day. Nevertheless the advance of the Union army hung close upon the heels of the Confederates. The rear corps under Gordon had burned the railroad bridge near Farmville behind them; but General Barlow, sending his men forward at double-quick, saved the wagon bridge, and the Second Corps crossed over without delay and continued the chase, Humphreys taking the northern road, and sending Barlow by the railroad bed along the river. Barlow overtook Gordon's rear, working great destruction among his trains. Humphreys came up with the main body shortly after noon, and pressing them closely held them till evening, expecting Barlow to join him, and Wright and Crook to cross the river and attack from the south, a movement which the swollen water and the destruction of the bridge prevented. General Irvin Gregg's brigade had indeed succeeded in getting over, but was attacked by an overwhelming force of Confederate cavalry,— three divisions,— Gregg being captured, and his brigade driven back. This trivial success in the midst of unspeakable disaster delighted General Lee. He said to his son, W. H. F. Lee, "Keep your command together and in good spirits, General; do not let it think of surrender. I will get you out of this."

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Apl. 7, 1865.

J. E. Cooke, "Life of R. E. Lee," p. 455.

But his inveterate optimism was not shared by his subordinates. A number of his principal officers, selecting General William N. Pendleton as their spokesman, made known to him on the 7th their belief that further resistance was useless, and

CHAP. IX. advised surrender. General Lee replied: "I trust
Apl. 7, 1865. it has not come to that. . . We have yet too many bold men to think of laying down our arms." Besides, he feared that if he made the first overtures for capitulation Grant would regard it as a confession of weakness, and demand unconditional surrender. But General Grant did not wish to drive a gallant antagonist to such extremes. On this same day, seeing how desperate was Lee's condition, and anxious to have an end of the now useless strife, he sent him this courteous and generous summons:

Long, "Memoirs of R. E. Lee," p. 417.

Apl. 7, 1865.

> The results of the last week must convince you of the hopelessness of further resistance, on the part of the Army of Northern Virginia, in this struggle. I feel that it is so, and regard it as my duty to shift from myself the responsibility of any further effusion of blood, by asking of you the surrender of that portion of the Confederate States army known as the Army of Northern Virginia.

Grant, "Personal Memoirs." Vol. II., pp. 478, 479.

This letter was sent at night through Humphreys's lines to Lee, who at once answered: "Though not entertaining the opinion you express on the hopelessness of further resistance on the part of the Army of Northern Virginia, I reciprocate your desire to avoid useless effusion of blood, and therefore, before considering your proposition, ask the terms you will offer on condition of its surrender."

Ibid., p. 479.

The forlorn remnant of the Confederate army stole away in the night, on the desperate chance of finding food at Appomattox and a way of escape to Lynchburg, and at daybreak the hot pursuit was resumed by the Second and Sixth Corps. All this day the flight and chase continued, through a portion of Virginia never as yet wasted by the passage

of hostile armies. The air was sweet and pure, scented by opening buds and the breath of spring; the early peach trees were in flower; the sylvan by-paths were slightly shaded by the pale-green foliage of leafing trees. Through these quiet solitudes the diminishing army of Lee plodded on, in the apathetic obedience which is all there is left to brave men when hope is gone, and behind them came the victorious legions of Grant, inspired to the forgetfulness of pain and fatigue by the stimulus of a prodigious success. Sheridan, on the extreme left, by unheard-of exertions, at last accomplished the important task of placing himself squarely on Lee's line of retreat. His advance, under George A. Custer, captured, about sunset on the evening of the 8th, Appomattox Station with four trains of provisions, then attacked the rebel force advancing from Farmville, and drove it towards the Court House, taking twenty-five guns and many prisoners. A reconnaissance revealed the startling fact that Lee's whole army was coming up the road. Though he had nothing but cavalry, Sheridan, with undaunted courage, resolved to hold the inestimable advantage he had gained, sending a request to Grant to hurry up the required infantry support, saying that if Gibbon and Griffin could get to him that night, they might "perhaps finish the job in the morning." He added, with singular prescience, referring to the negotiations which had been opened, "I do not think Lee means to surrender until compelled to do so."

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April, 1865.

Badeau, "Military History of U. S. Grant." Vol. III., p. 594.

This was strictly true. When Grant received Lee's first letter he replied on the morning of the 8th, saying: "Peace being my great desire, there is

CHAP. IX. but one condition I would insist upon, namely, that the men and officers surrendered shall be disqualified from taking up arms again against the Government of the United States until properly exchanged. I will meet you, or will designate officers to meet any officers you may name for the same purpose, at any point agreeable to you, for the purpose of arranging definitely the terms upon which the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia will be received." But in the course of the day a last hope seemed to have come to Lee that he might yet reach Appomattox in safety and thence make his way to Lynchburg — a hope utterly fallacious, for Stoneman was now on the railroad near Lynchburg. He therefore, while giving orders to his subordinates to press with the utmost energy westward, answered General Grant's letter in a tone more ingenious than candid, reserving, while negotiations were going on, the chance of breaking away. He said:

Humphreys, "The Virginia Campaign of '64 and '65," p. 439.

Apl. 8, 1865.

> I received at a late hour your note of to-day. In mine of yesterday I did not intend to propose the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia, but to ask the terms of your proposition. To be frank, I do not think the emergency has arisen to call for the surrender of this army; but as the restoration of peace should be the sole object of all, I desired to know whether your proposals would lead to that end. I cannot, therefore, meet you with a view to surrender the Army of Northern Virginia; but as far as your proposal may affect the Confederate States forces under my command, and tend to the restoration of peace, I should be pleased to meet you at 10 A. M. to-morrow, on the old stage road to Richmond between the picket lines of the two armies.

Grant, "Personal Memoirs." Vol. II., p. 627.

Grant was not to be entrapped into a futile negotiation for the restoration of peace. He doubtless had in view the President's peremptory instructions

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of the 3d of March, forbidding him to engage in any political discussion or conference, or to entertain any proposition except for the surrender of armies. He therefore answered General Lee on the morning of the 9th of April with perfect courtesy, but with unmistakable frankness, saying: "I have no authority to treat on the subject of peace. The meeting proposed for 10 A. M. to-day could lead to no good. I will state, however, General, that I am equally anxious for peace with yourself, and the whole North entertains the same feeling. The terms upon which peace can be had are well understood. By the South laying down their arms they will hasten that most desirable event, save thousands of human lives and hundreds of millions of property not yet destroyed. Seriously hoping that all our difficulties may be settled without the loss of another life, I subscribe myself, etc." He dispatched this letter to Lee and then set off to the left, where Sheridan was barring Lee's last avenue of escape.

Grant, "Personal Memoirs," Vol. II., p. 627.

It appears from General Lee's report, made three days after the surrender, that he had no intention on the night of the 8th of giving up the fight. He ordered Fitz Lee, supported by Gordon, in the morning "to drive the enemy from his front, wheel to the left and cover the passage of the trains, while Longstreet . . . should close up and hold the position." He expected to find only cavalry on the ground, and thought even his remnant of infantry could break through Sheridan's horse while he himself was amusing Grant with platonic discussions in the rear. But he received, on arriving at the rendezvous he had suggested, not only Grant's stern refusal to enter into a political negotiation,

Long, "Memoirs of R. E. Lee," p. 694.

CHAP. IX. but other intelligence which was to him the trump of doom. Ord and Griffin had made an almost incredible march of about thirty miles during the preceding day and night, and had come up at daylight to the post assigned them in support of Sheridan; Apl. 9, 1865. and when Fitzhugh Lee and Gordon made their advance in the morning and the National cavalry fell slowly back, in obedience to their orders, there suddenly appeared before the amazed Confederates a formidable force of infantry filling the road, covering the adjacent hills and valley, and barring as with an adamantine wall the further progress of the army of the revolt. The marching of the Confederate army was over forever.

The appalling tidings were instantly carried to Lee. He at once sent orders to cease hostilities, and, suddenly brought to a sense of his real situation, sent a note to Grant, asking an interview in accordance with the offer contained in Grant's letter of the 8th for the surrender of his army. Grant had created the emergency calling for such action. As Sheridan was about to charge on the huddled mass of astonished horse and foot in front of him a flag of truce was displayed, and the war was at an end. The Army of Northern Virginia was already captured. "I've got 'em, like that!" cried Sheridan, doubling up his fist, fearful of some ruse or evasion in the white flag. The Army of the Potomac on the north and east, Sheridan and Ord on the south and west, completely encircled the demoralized and crumbled army of Lee. There was not another day's fighting in them. That morning at three o'clock Gordon had sent word to Lee that he had fought his corps "to a frazzle," and could

Badeau, "Military History of U. S. Grant." Vol. III., p. 601.

do nothing more unless heavily supported by Longstreet. Lee and his army were prisoners of war before he and Grant met at Appomattox.

Long, "Memoirs of R. E. Lee," p. 421.

The meeting took place at the house of Wilmer McLean, in the edge of the village. Lee met Grant at the threshold, and ushered him into a small and barely furnished parlor, where were soon assembled the leading officers of the National army. General Lee was accompanied only by his secretary, Colonel Charles Marshall. A short conversation led up to a request from Lee for the terms on which the surrender of his army would be received. Grant briefly stated the terms which would be accorded. Lee acceded to them, and Grant wrote the following letter:

Apl. 9, 1865.

In accordance with the substance of my letter to you of the 8th inst., I propose to receive the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia on the following terms, to wit: Rolls of all the officers and men to be made in duplicate; one copy to be given to an officer designated by me, the other to be retained by such officer or officers as you may designate. The officers to give their individual paroles not to take up arms against the Government of the United States until properly exchanged; and each company or regimental commander sign a like parole for the men of their commands. The arms, artillery, and public property to be parked and stacked, and turned over to the officer appointed by me to receive them. This will not embrace the side-arms of the officers, nor their private horses or baggage. This done, each officer and man will be allowed to return to their homes, not to be disturbed by United States authority so long as they observe their parole and the laws in force where they may reside.

Facsimile of original MS. Grant, "Memoirs." Vol. II., p. 496.

General Grant says in his "Memoirs" that up to the moment when he put pen to paper he had not thought of a word that he should write. The terms he had verbally proposed, and which Lee had

CHAP. IX. Apl. 9, 1865.

accepted, were soon put in writing, and there he might have stopped. But as he wrote, a feeling of sympathy for his gallant antagonist gradually came over him, and he added the extremely liberal terms with which his letter closed. The sight of Lee's sword, an especially fine one, suggested the paragraph allowing officers to retain their side-arms; and he ended with a phrase which he had evidently not thought of, and for which he had no authority, which practically pardoned and amnestied every man in Lee's army — a thing he had refused to consider the day before, and which had been expressly forbidden him in President Lincoln's order of the 3d of March.[1] Yet so great was the joy over the crowning victory, so deep was the gratitude of the Government and the people to Grant and his heroic army, that his terms were accepted as he wrote them, and his exercise of the Executive prerogative of pardon entirely overlooked. It must be noticed here, however, as a few days later it led the greatest of Grant's generals into a serious error.

Lee must have read the memorandum of terms with as much surprise as gratification. He said the permission for officers to retain their side-arms would have a happy effect. He then suggested and gained another important concession — that those of the cavalry and artillery who owned their own horses should be allowed to take them home to put in their crops. Lee wrote a brief reply accepting the

[1] The President, in his Amnesty Proclamation of December 8, 1863, expressly excepted officers above the rank of colonel, all who left seats in Congress to aid the rebellion, and all who resigned commissions in the army or navy of the United States and afterwards participated in the rebellion. The terms granted to General Lee's army at Appomattox practically extended amnesty to many persons in these classes.

terms. He then remarked that his army was in a starving condition, and asked Grant to provide them with subsistence and forage, to which he at once assented, and asked for how many men the rations would be wanted. Lee answered, "About twenty-five thousand," and orders were at once given to issue them. The number surrendered turned out to be even larger than this. The paroles signed amounted to 28,231. If we add to this the captures at Five Forks, Petersburg, and Sailor's Creek, the thousands who deserted the failing cause at every by-road leading to their homes, and filled every wood and thicket between Richmond and Lynchburg, we can see how considerable an army Lee commanded when Grant "started out gunning." Yet every Confederate writer, speaker, and singer who refers to the surrender says, and will say forever, that Lee surrendered only seven thousand muskets.

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Apl. 9, 1865.

Grant, "Personal Memoirs," Vol. II., p. 495.

With these brief and simple formalities one of the most momentous transactions of modern times was concluded. The news soon transpired, and the Union gunners prepared to fire a National salute; but Grant would not permit it. He forbade any rejoicing over a fallen enemy, who he hoped would hereafter be an enemy no longer. The next day he rode to the Confederate lines to make a visit of farewell to General Lee. Sitting on horseback between the lines, the two heroes of the war held a friendly conversation. Lee considered the war at an end, slavery dead, the National authority restored; Johnston must now surrender — the sooner the better. Grant urged him to make a public appeal to hasten the return of peace; but Lee, true to

Ibid., p. 497.

CHAP. IX. his ideas of subordination to a government which had ceased to exist, said he could not do this without consulting the Confederate President. They parted with courteous good wishes, and Grant, without pausing to look at the city he had taken or
Apl. 10, 1865. the enormous system of works which had so long held him at bay, intent only upon reaping the peaceful results of his colossal victory, and putting an end to the waste and the burden of war, hurried away to Washington to do what he could for this practical and beneficent purpose. He had done an inestimable service to the Republic: he had won immortal honor for himself; but neither then nor at any subsequent period of his life was there any sign in his words or his bearing of the least touch of vainglory. The day after Appomattox he was as simple, modest, and unassuming a citizen as he was the day before Sumter.

CHAPTER X

THE FALL OF THE REBEL CAPITAL

SINCE the visit of Blair and the return of the rebel commissioners from the Hampton Roads Conference, no event of special significance had excited the authorities or people of Richmond. February and March passed away in the routine of war and politics, which at the end of four years had become familiar and dull. To shrewd observers in that city things were going from bad to worse. Stephens, the Confederate Vice-President, had abandoned the capital and the cause and retired to Georgia to await the end. Judge John A. Campbell, though performing the duties of Assistant Secretary of War, made, among his intimate friends, no concealment of his opinion that the last days of the Confederacy had come. The members of the rebel Congress, adjourning after their long and fruitless winter session, gave many indications that they never expected to reassemble. A large part of their winter's work had been to demonstrate without direct accusation that it was the Confederate maladministration which was wrecking the Southern cause. On his part Jefferson Davis prolonged their session a week to send them his last message — a dry lecture to prove that the blame rested en-

Jones, "A Rebel War Clerk's Diary." Vol. II., p. 450.

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tirely on their own shoulders. The last desperate measure of rebel statesmanship, the law to permit masters to put their slaves into the Southern armies to fight for the rebellion, was so palpably illogical and impracticable that both the rebel Congress and the rebel President appear to have treated it as the merest legislative rubbish; or else the latter would scarcely have written in the same message, after stating that "much benefit is anticipated from this measure," that "The people of the Confederacy can be but little known to him who supposes it possible they would ever consent to purchase, at the cost of degradation and slavery, permission to live in a country garrisoned by their own negroes, and governed by officers sent by the conqueror to rule over them."

Davis, Message, Mar. 13, 1865. "Annual Cyclopædia," 1865, pp. 718, 719.

Jefferson Davis was strongly addicted to political contradictions, but we must suppose even his cross-eyed philosophy capable of detecting that a negro willing to fight in slavery in preference to fighting in freedom was not a very safe reliance for Southern independence. The language as he employs it here fitly closes the continuous official Confederate wail about Northern subjugation, Northern despotism, Northern barbarity, Northern atrocity, and Northern inhumanity which rings through his letters, speeches, orders, messages, and proclamations with monotonous dissonance during his whole four years of authority.

Of all the Southern people none were quite so blinded as those of Richmond. Their little bubble of pride at being the Confederate capital was ever iridescent with the brightest hopes. They had no dream that the visible symbols of Confederate

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Government upon which their eyes had nourished their faith would disappear almost as suddenly as if an earthquake had swallowed them. Poverty, distress, and desolation had indeed crept into their homes, but the approach had been slow, and mitigated by the exaltations of a heroic self-sacrifice.

All accounts agree that when on Sunday morning, April 2, 1865, the people of Richmond went forth to their places of worship, they had no thought of imminent calamity. The ominous signs of such a possibility had escaped their attention. A few days before, Mrs. Jefferson Davis with her children had left Richmond for the South and sent a part of her furniture to auction. So also several weeks before, the horses remaining in the city had been impressed to collect the tobacco into convenient warehouses where it could be readily burned to prevent its falling into Yankee hands.

Jones, "A Rebel War Clerk's Diary." Vol. II., p. 438.

But the significance of these and perhaps other indications could not be measured by the general populace. In fact for some days a rather unusual quiet had prevailed. That morning Jefferson Davis was in his pew in St. Paul's Church when, before the sermon was ended, an officer walked up the aisle and handed him a telegram from General Lee at Petersburg, dated at half-past ten that morning, in which he read, "My lines are broken in three places; Richmond must be evacuated this evening." He rose and left the church; whereupon the officer handed the telegram to the rector, who as speedily as possible brought the services to a close, making the announcement that General Ewell, the commander at Richmond, desired the military forces to assemble at three o'clock in the

CHAP. X. afternoon. The news seems also to have reached in some form one or two of the other churches, so that though no announcement of the fact was made, the city little by little became aware of the impending change.

Apl. 2, 1865. The fact of its being Sunday, with no business going on and rest pervading every household, doubtless served to moderate the shock to the public. Yet very soon the scene was greatly transformed. From the Sabbath stillness of the morning the streets became alive with bustle and activity. Jefferson Davis had called his Cabinet and officials together, and the hurried packing of the Confederate archives for shipment was soon in progress. Citizens who had the means made hasty preparations for flight; the far greater number who were compelled to stay were in a flutter to devise measures of protection or concealment. The banks were opened and depositors flocked thither to withdraw their money and valuables. A remnant of the Virginia Legislature gathered in the Representatives' Hall at the Capitol to debate a question of greater urgency than had ever before taxed their wisdom or eloquence. In another room sat the municipal council, for once impressed with the full weight of its responsibility. Meanwhile the streets were full of hurrying people, of loaded wagons, of galloping military officers conveying orders.

One striking sketch of that wild hurry-skurry deserves to be recorded. "Lumkin, who for many years had kept a slave-trader's jail, also had a work of necessity on hand—fifty men, women, and children, who must be saved to the missionary institution for the future enlightenment of Africa.

Although it was the Lord's day (perhaps he was comforted by the thought that 'the better the day the better the deed') the coffle-gang was made up in the jail-yard, within pistol shot of Davis's parlor window, within a stone's throw of the Monumental Church, and a sad and weeping throng, chained two and two, the last slave-coffle that shall ever tread the streets of Richmond, were hurried to the Danville depot." But the "institution," like the Confederacy, was already *in extremis*. The account adds that the departing trains could afford no transportation for this last slave cargo, and the gang went to pieces, like every other Richmond organization, military and political.

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"Atlantic Monthly," June, 1865.

Evening had come, and the confusion of the streets found its culmination at the railroad depots. Military authority made room for the fleeing President and his Cabinet, and department officials and their boxes of more important papers. The cars were overcrowded and overloaded long before the clamoring multitude and piles of miscellaneous baggage could be got aboard, and by the occasional light of lanterns flitting hither and thither the wheezing and coughing trains moved out into the darkness. The Legislature of Virginia and the Governor of the State departed in a canal boat towards Lynchburg. All available vehicles carrying fugitives were leaving the city by various country roads, but the great mass of the population, unable to get away, had to confront the dread certainty that only one night remained before the appearance of a hostile army with the power of death and destruction over them and their homes.

CHAP. X. How this power might be exercised, present signs were none too reassuring. Since noon, when
Apl. 2, 1865. the fact of evacuation had become certain, the whole fabric of society seemed to be crumbling to pieces. Military authority was concentrating its energy on only two objects, destruction and departure. The civil authority was lending a hand, for the single hasty precaution which the city council could ordain was that all the liquors in the city should be emptied out. To order this was one thing, to have it rigorously executed would be asking quite too much of the lower human appetites, and while some of the street gutters ran with alcohol, enough was surreptitiously consumed to produce a frightful state of excitement and drunkenness. No picture need be drawn of the possibilities of violence and crime which must have haunted the timid watchers in Richmond who listened all night to the shouts, the blasphemy, the disorder that rose and fell in the streets, or who furtively noted the signs of pillage already begun. And how shall we follow their imagination, passing from these acts of the friends of yesterday to what they might look for from the enemies expected to-morrow? And there was that final horror of horrors, the negro soldiers, held up to their dread by the presidential message of Jefferson Davis only two weeks before! What now of the fear of servile insurrection, the terrible specter they had secretly nursed from their very childhood? It is scarcely possible they can have escaped such meditations even though already weary and exhausted with the surprises and labors of the day, with the startling anxieties of the evening, with the absorbing care of

burying their household silver and secreting their yet more precious personal ornaments and tokens of affection. In Europe, a thousand wars have rendered such experiences historically commonplace; in America, let us hope that a thousand years of peace may render their repetition impossible. CHAP. X.

Full of dangerous portent as had been the night, the morning became yet more ominous. Long before day sleepers and watchers alike were startled by a succession of explosions which shook every building. The military authorities were blowing up the vessels in construction at the river. These were nine in number, three of them ironclads of four guns each, the others small wooden ships.[1] Next, the arsenal was fired; and, as many thousands of loaded shells were stored here, there succeeded for a period the sounds of a continuous cannonade. Already fire had been set to the warehouses containing the collected tobacco and cotton, among which loaded shells had also been scattered to insure more complete destruction. Apl. 3, 1865.

There is a conflict of testimony as to who is responsible for the deplorable public calamity which ensued. The rebel Congress had passed a law ordering the Government tobacco and other public property to be burned, and Jefferson Davis states that the general commanding had advised with the mayor and city authorities about precautions against a conflagration. On the other hand, Lieu- Davis, "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government," Vol. II., p. 666.

1 "The following is a list of the vessels destroyed: *Virginia*, flagship, ironclad, four guns; *Richmond*, ironclad, four guns; *Fredericksburg*, ironclad, four guns; *Nansemond*, wooden, two guns; *Hampton*, wooden, two guns; *Roanoke*, wooden, one gun; *Torpedo*, tender; *Shrapnel; Patrick Henry*, school-ship." — Porter, Report, April 5, 1865. Report, Secretary of the Navy, 1865-66.

CHAP. X. tenant-General Ewell, the military commander, has authorized the statement that he not only earnestly warned the city authorities of the certain consequences of the measure, but that he took the responsibility of disobeying the law and military
Apl. 3, 1865. orders. "I left the city about seven o'clock in the morning," he writes; "as yet nothing had been fired by my orders; yet the buildings and depot near the railway bridge were on fire, and the flames were so close as to be disagreeable as I rode by them."[1] By this time the spirit of lawlessness and hunger for pillage had gained full headway. The rear guard of the retreating Confederates set the three great bridges in flames, and while the fire started at the four immense warehouses and various points, and soon uniting in an uncontrollable conflagration was beginning to eat out the heart of the city, a miscellaneous mob went from store to store, and with a beam for a battering ram smashed in the

[1] The full report of these occurrences, written by General Ewell, seems never to have been printed.

Lossing, writing from both the written statement and verbal explanations of General Ewell, says: "General Ewell earnestly warned the city authorities of the danger of acting according to the letter of that resolution; for a brisk wind was blowing from the south which would send the flames of the burning warehouses into the town and imperil the whole city. Early in the evening a deputation of citizens called upon President Davis and remonstrated against carrying out that order of Congress, because the safety of the city would be jeopardized. He was then in an unamiable state of mind, and curtly replied, 'Your statement that the burning of the warehouses will endanger the city is only a cowardly pretext to save your property for the Yankees!' After Davis's departure a committee of the city council, at the suggestion of General Ewell, went to the War Office to remonstrate with whomsoever might represent the department, against the execution of the perilous order. Major Melton rudely replied in language which was almost an echo of that of his superior, and General Ewell, in spite of his earnest remonstrances, was ordered to cause the four warehouses near the river to be set on fire at three o'clock in the morning."— Lossing, in "The Independent" (New York), March 11, 1886.

doors so that the crowd might freely enter and plunder the contents. This rapacity, first directed towards bread and provision stores, gradually extended itself to all other objects until mere greed of booty rather than need or usefulness became the ruling instinct, and promoted the waste and destruction of that which had been stolen. CHAP. X.

Into this pandemonium of fire and license there came one additional terror to fill up its dramatic completeness. "About ten o'clock," writes an eye-witness, "just before the entrance of the Federal army, a cry of dismay rang all along the streets which were out of the track of the fire, and I saw a crowd of leaping, shouting demons, in party-colored clothes, and with heads half shaven. It was the convicts from the penitentiary, who had overcome the guard, set fire to the prison, and were now at liberty. Many a heart which had kept its courage to this point quailed at the sight. Fortunately, they were too intent upon securing their freedom to do much damage." Apl. 3, 1865. Mary Tucker Magill, in "The Independent" (New York), Jan. 7, 1886.

It is quite probable that the magnitude and rapidity of the disaster served in a measure to mitigate its evil results. The burning of seven hundred buildings, comprising the entire business portion of Richmond, warehouses, manufactories, mills, depots, and stores, all within the brief space of a day, was a visitation so sudden, so unexpected, so stupefying as to overawe and terrorize even wrong-doers, and made the harvest of plunder so abundant as to serve to scatter the mob and satisfy its rapacity to quick repletion.

Before a new hunger could arise, assistance, protection, and relief were at hand. The Mayor and

CHAP. X.

Apl. 3, 1865.

citizens' committee who went forth met General Weitzel a little before seven o'clock in the morning, near Gilliss Creek, outside the limits of Richmond, where a detachment of Union pickets, numbering sixty or seventy men, under command of Lieutenant Royal B. Prescott had also arrived. Here an informal surrender took place, a ceremony which was repeated with more formality in the capital at a later hour. This incident over, the general and his staff proceeded into the city, followed by Lieutenant Prescott and his force, and preceded by a squad of the general's orderlies[1] from the Fourth Massachusetts Cavalry, commanded by Major A. H. Stevens, and established headquarters in the house lately occupied by Jefferson Davis. Lieutenant Prescott reached Capitol Square soon after seven o'clock; at that hour there was no flag flying, but Major Stevens soon arrived and hoisted two cavalry guidons over the State House.[2] Mean-

S. M. Thompson, "Thirteenth Regiment New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry," p. 559.

[1] We here use General Weitzel's phrase in a letter to Horace Greeley, dated March 9, 1869; but T. Thatcher Graves, M. D., of Providence, R. I., has written a long and interesting narrative of the event, in which he says: "As soon as it was light General Weitzel ordered Colonel E. E. Graves, senior aide-de-camp, and Major Atherton H. Stevens, Jr., Provost Marshal, to take a detachment of forty men from the two companies of the Fourth Massachusetts Cavalry (white) attached to our headquarters, and . . . press forward towards Richmond on a reconnaissance."

It may have been this force, or a part of it, which General Weitzel's letter designates as "a squad of my orderlies."

[2] Dr. Graves's MS. narrative says "Colonel Graves and Major Stevens each took a guidon and ascended to the roof of the Capitol, and, hauling down the Confederate flag," they proceeded to hoist theirs upon the Capitol.

Lieutenant Prescott relates that no flag was flying over the Capitol when he entered the grounds, but that one suddenly appeared on the roof, raised by a colored boy of seventeen, named Richard G. Forrester, who stated he had been a page or errand boy employed in the Capitol; also that it was a flag used before the ordinance of secession, but which the secessionists then took down and threw among rubbish under the roof of the building. He further stated that he had carried it

GENERAL JOHN GIBBON.

while, from the meeting at Gilliss Creek, and probably on information gathered from the Mayor, General Weitzel had sent an aide back "with orders to get the first brigade he could find, and bring it in to act as provost guard." This proved to be General E. H. Ripley's brigade of General Charles Devens's division of the Twenty-fourth Army Corps. The brigade was headed by General Devens, with the Thirteenth New Hampshire Volunteers as its leading regiment, and marched into the city with colors flying and bands playing, reaching the Capitol grounds a little after eight o'clock; from where the force was sent in various directions on the urgent duties of the hour.

Weitzel, Testimony. Report Committee on Conduct of the War, 1864–65. Part I., pp. 522, 523.

Col. G. A. Bruce to the Authors, Dec. 14, 1889. MS.

Soon afterward there occurred what was to the inhabitants the central incident of the day — the event which engrossed their solicitude even more

Apl. 3, 1865.

home, concealed it, and that — "when I saw you 'uns comin'" — he drew the old flag from its hiding place, and ran to the Capitol and raised it. Whether this was an old Union flag, a Virginia State flag, or some early form of Confederate flag, is left in doubt.

As a continuation of the incidents of the flag raising, we also quote from a letter written us by Loomis L. Langdon, Colonel First Artillery U. S. A., who, after mentioning the two cavalry guidons hoisted by Major Stevens, continues:

"Some hours after that, without my personally knowing then of Major Stevens's movements, my artillery began the march to Richmond, then almost in sight. As chief of artillery of the Twenty-fifth Corps, I rode with General Weitzel. On the way to the city young Johnston Livingston De Peyster rode alongside of me, and during a conversation showed me a flag he had attached to his saddle, and as we neared the city he invited me to go to the roof of the State House and hoist the flag with him. Together we passed through the Senate Chamber and up some dark passages, in which the gas jets were still burning, and got on the roof. . . The wind blew a hurricane. After a good deal of trouble we 'bent' on our flag, but found our progress impeded by something bulky at the top of the flagstaff. This we pulled down, and the bulky object proved to be two cavalry guidons (U. S. flags) belonging to the Fourth Massachusetts Cavalry, which Major Stevens had hoisted."

Letter dated Feb. 24, 1890.

CHAP. X. than the vanished rebel government, the destroyed city, or the lost cause. General Weitzel's direction calling in the provost guard had been accompanied by another that all the rest of his troops should remain outside the city to take possession of the inner line of redoubts. This second order, however, failed to reach the Fifth Massachussets Cavalry, a colored regiment under command of Colonel Charles Francis Adams, posted on the extreme right of the Union line, who instead obeyed an earlier request from General Devens to advance into the city; and this colored regiment therefore, led by a grandson of President John Quincy Adams, shared with the six white regiments of General Ripley's brigade the honor of a march into
APL. 3, 1865. the rebel capital on the day of its surrender. The arrival of these colored soldiers was to the people of Richmond the visible realization of the new order to which four years of rebellion and war had brought them. The prejudices of a lifetime cannot be instantly overcome, and the rebels of Richmond doubtless felt that this was the final drop in their cup of misery and that their "subjugation" was complete.

It is related that about this time, as by a common impulse, the white people of Richmond disappeared from the streets, and the black population streamed forth with an apparently instinctive recognition that their day of jubilee had at last arrived. To see this compact, organized body of men of their own color, on horseback, in neat uniforms, with flashing sabers, with the gleam of confidence and triumph in their eyes, was a palpable living reality to which their hope and pride,

long repressed, gave instant response. They greeted them with expressions of welcome in every form — cheers, shouts, laughter, and a rattle of exclamations — as they rushed along the sides of the streets to keep pace with the advancing column and feast their eyes on the incredible sight; while the black Union soldiers rose high in their stirrups and with waving swords and deafening huzzas acknowledged the fraternal reception. CHAP. X.

But there was little time for holiday enjoyment. The conflagration was roaring, destruction was advancing; fury of fire, blackness of smoke, crash of falling walls, obstruction of débris, confusion, helplessness, danger, seemed everywhere. The great Capitol Square on the hill had become the refuge of women and children and the temporary storing-place of the few household effects they had saved from the burning. From this center, where the Stars and Stripes again floated, there now flowed back upon the stricken city, not the doom and devastation for which its people looked, but the friendly help and protection of a generous army bringing them peace, and the spirit of a benevolent Government tendering them forgiveness and reconciliation. Up to this time it would seem that not an organization had been proposed and but feeble efforts made to stay the ravages of the flames. The public spirit of Richmond was crushed by the awful catastrophe. Apl. 3, 1865.

The advent of the Union army breathed a new life into this social paralysis. The first care of the officers was to organize resistance to fire, to reëstablish order and personal security, and convert the unrestrained mob of whites and blacks into a regu-

CHAP. X. lated energy, to save what remained of the city from the needless burning and pillage to which its own friends had devoted it, against remonstrance and against humanity. And this was not all. Begin-
Apl. 3, 1865. ning that afternoon and continuing many days, these "Yankee invaders" fed the poor of Richmond, and saved them from the starvation to which the law of the Confederate Congress, relentlessly executed by the Confederate President and some of his subordinates, exposed them.

CHAPTER XI

LINCOLN IN RICHMOND

A LITTLE more than two months before these events, President Lincoln had written to General Grant: "Please read and answer this letter as though I was not President, but only a friend. My son, now in his twenty-second year, having graduated at Harvard, wishes to see something of the war before it ends. I do not wish to put him in the ranks, nor yet to give him a commission, to which those who have already served long are better entitled, and better qualified to hold. Could he, without embarrassment to you, or detriment to the service, go into your military family with some nominal rank, I, and not the public, furnishing his necessary means? If no, say so without the least hesitation, because I am as anxious and as deeply interested that you shall not be encumbered as you can be yourself."

Lincoln to Grant, Jan. 19, 1865. MS.

Grant replied as follows: "Your favor of this date in relation to your son serving in some military capacity is received. I will be most happy to have him in my military family in the manner you propose. The nominal rank given him is immaterial, but I would suggest that of captain, as I have three staff-officers now, of considerable service, in

CHAP. XI.

no higher grade. Indeed, I have one officer with only the rank of lieutenant who has been in the service from the beginning of the war. This, however will make no difference, and I would still say give the rank of captain.— Please excuse my writing on a half sheet. I have no resource but to take the blank half of your letter." The President's son therefore became a member of Grant's staff with the rank of captain, and acquitted himself of the duties of that station with fidelity and honor.

Grant to Lincoln, Jan. 21, 1865. MS.

We may assume that it was the anticipated important military events rather than the presence of Captain Robert T. Lincoln at Grant's headquarters which induced the General on the 20th of March, 1865, to invite the President and Mrs. Lincoln to make a visit to his camp near Richmond; and on the 22d they and their younger son Thomas, nicknamed "Tad," proceeded in the steamer *River Queen* from Washington to City Point, where General Grant with his family and staff were "occupying a pretty group of huts on the bank of the James River, overlooking the harbor, which was full of vessels of all classes, both war and merchant, with wharves and warehouses on an extensive scale." Here, making his home on the steamer which brought him, the President remained about ten days, enjoying what was probably the most satisfactory relaxation in which he had been able to indulge during his whole Presidential service. It was springtime and the weather was moderately steady; his days were occupied visiting the various camps of the great army in company with the General.

Sherman, "Memoirs." Vol. II., p. 324.

CHAP. XI.

"He was a good horseman," records a member of the General's staff, "and made his way through swamps and over corduroy roads as well as the best trooper in the command. The soldiers invariably recognized him and greeted him, wherever he appeared amongst them, with cheers that were no lip service, but came from the depth of their hearts." Many evening hours were passed with groups of officers before roaring camp-fires, where Mr. Lincoln was always the magnetic center of genial conversation and lively anecdote. The interest of the visit was further enhanced by the arrival at City Point, on the evening of March 27, of General Sherman, who, having left General Schofield to command in his absence, made a hasty trip to confer with Grant. He was able to gratify the President with a narrative of the leading incidents of his great march from Atlanta to Savannah and from Savannah to Goldsboro', North Carolina. In one or two informal interviews in the after cabin of the *River Queen*, Lincoln, Grant, Sherman, and Rear-Admiral Porter enjoyed a frank interchange of opinion about the favorable prospects of early and final victory, and of the speedy realization of the long hoped for peace. Sherman and Porter affirm that the President confided to them certain liberal views on the subject of reconstructing State governments in the conquered States which do not seem compatible with the very guarded language of Mr. Lincoln elsewhere used or recorded by him. It is fair to presume that their own enthusiasm colored their recollection of the President's expressions, though it is no doubt true that he spoke of his willingness to be liberal to the verge of prudence,

Gen. Horace Porter, in "The Century Magazine," Oct., 1885.

1865.

CHAP. XI. and that he even gave them to understand that he would not be displeased at the escape from the country of Jefferson Davis and other principal rebel leaders.

1865. On the 29th of March the party separated, Sherman returning to North Carolina, and Grant starting on his final campaign to Appomattox. Five days later Grant informed Mr. Lincoln of the fall of Petersburg, and on his request the President made a flying visit to that town for another brief conference with the General. Here, also, amid the wildest enthusiasm, the President again reviewed the victorious regiments of Grant, marching through Petersburg in pursuit of Lee. The capture of Richmond was hourly expected, and that welcome information reached Lincoln after his return to City Point.

Between the receipt of this news and the following forenoon, but before any information of the great fire had been received, a visit to Richmond was arranged for the President and Admiral Porter.[1] Ample precautions were taken at the start; the President went in the *River Queen* with her escort the *Bat;* Admiral Porter went in his flagship, the *Malvern;* the transport *Columbus* carried a small cavalry escort and ambulances for the party. A tug used at City Point to convey the President to and from the landing to the *River*

[1] Since this chapter appeared in serial form, Major C. B. Penrose, U. S. A., who was detailed by Secretary Stanton to accompany President Lincoln on his visit, has permitted the editor of "The Century Magazine," to print in the June number, 1890, a copy of the skeleton diary he kept at the time, from which we have been able to fill up the historical narrative with much greater accuracy. The authors are also indebted to Major Penrose for much additional information.

GENERAL GODFREY WEITZEL.

lte page 216.

Queen at her anchorage in the harbor, also went along. The little flotilla steamed cautiously up the James River beyond Drewry's Bluff, distant twenty-eight to thirty miles from City Point by the very tortuous windings of the river. Some distance above Drewry's Bluff the rebels had obstructed the stream by formidable rows of piling, leaving only a small passage which they could easily close if necessary. CHAP. XI.

Arriving at these obstructions, the further progress of the larger vessels was for the moment found impossible. Admiral Farragut visited Richmond immediately after its fall; and on this morning of April 4 came down from that city to meet the President, on the rebel flag-of-truce boat *Allison*, which had escaped destruction. By an accident to her machinery the *Allison* had swung across the opening in the piles, and was held in place by the current. Instead of patiently waiting until she could be moved, it was resolved to proceed without the vessels. The Presidential party was transferred to the twelve-oared barge of Admiral Porter; a guard of twenty or thirty marines was put aboard the tug, and the tug, taking the barge in tow, managed to pass through the opening in the piles partly obstructed by the *Allison*. But when the obstructions had been passed, the President insisted that the tug should return and help the *Allison* out of her difficulty. In doing this, the tug got aground, and the mishap left the party no alternative but to proceed in the barge, rowed by the Admiral's twelve sailors, without other escort of any kind; and in this manner the President traversed the remaining distance to Richmond. No 1865.

CHAP. XI. accident befell them; they passed the suburb of Rockett's and proceeded to the neighborhood of the Manchester Bridge, effecting a landing one square above Libby Prison, where there was neither officer, nor wagon, nor escort to meet and receive them.

Never in the history of the world did the head of a mighty nation and the conqueror of a great
Apl. 4, 1865. rebellion enter the captured chief city of the insurgents in such humbleness and simplicity. As the party stepped from the barge, they found a guide among the contrabands who quickly crowded the streets; for the probable coming of the President had been circulated through the city. Ten of the sailors, armed with carbines, were formed as a guard, six in front and four in rear, and between these the party, consisting of the President, Admiral Porter, Captain C. B. Penrose of the Army, Captain A. H. Adams of the Navy, and Lieutenant W. W. Clemens of the Signal Corps, placed themselves, all being on foot; and in this order the improvised street procession walked a distance of perhaps a mile and a half to the center of Richmond. It was a long and fatiguing march, the probability of which had not been foreseen at starting. We quote from a private letter of Captain Penrose, written on April 10, 1865, a vivid description of its attendant scenes:

"On Tuesday we started for Richmond, and arrived there just thirty-six hours after Jefferson Davis had left. Here again was a perfect ovation of blacks and poor whites. The boat with our escort ran aground, so we pulled up to the city in Admiral Porter's barge. When we arrived, there was a rush for the President, and as we had but

ten sailors as a guard, and had to walk over a mile and a half to headquarters, it seemed foolhardy in the President to go. However we went through without accident; but I never passed a more anxious time than in this walk. In going up (and we were amongst the very first boats) we ran the risk of torpedoes and the obstructions; but I think the risk the President ran in going through the streets of Richmond was even greater, and shows him to have great courage. The streets of the city were filled with drunken rebels, both officers and men, and all was confusion. . . A large portion of the city was still on fire." CHAP. XI. April 4, 1865.

The imagination may easily fill up the picture of a gradually increasing crowd, principally of negroes, following the little group of marines and officers with the tall form of the President in its center; and, having learned that it was indeed Mr. Lincoln, giving expression to wonder, joy, and gratitude in a variety of picturesque emotional ejaculations peculiar to the colored race, and for which there was ample time while the little procession made its tiresome march, whose route cannot now be traced.

At length the party reached the headquarters of General Weitzel, established in the very house occupied by Jefferson Davis as the Presidential mansion of the Confederacy, and from which he had fled less than two days before. Here Mr. Lincoln was glad of a chance to sit down and rest, and a little later to partake of refreshments which the general provided. An informal reception, chiefly of Union officers, naturally followed, and later in the afternoon General Weitzel went with the President and Admiral Porter in a carriage,

CHAP. XI. guarded by an escort of cavalry, to visit the Capitol, the burnt district, Libby Prison, Castle Thunder, and other points of interest about the city; and of
Apl. 4, 1865. this afternoon drive also no narrative in detail by an eye-witness appears to have been written at the time.

It was probably before the President went on this drive that there occurred an interview on political topics which forms one of the chief points of interest connected with his visit. Judge John A. Campbell, rebel Assistant Secretary of War, remained in Richmond when on Sunday night the other members of the Confederate Government fled, and on Tuesday morning he reported to the Union military governor, General G. F. Shepley, and informed him of his "submission to the military
Campbell, Pamphlet. authorities." Learning from General Shepley that Mr. Lincoln was at City Point, he asked permission to see him. This application was evidently communicated to Mr. Lincoln, for shortly after his arrival a staff-officer informed Campbell that the requested interview would be granted, and conducted him to the President at the general's headquarters, where it took place. The rebel general J. R. Anderson and others were present as friends of the judge, and General Weitzel as the witness of Mr. Lincoln. Campbell, as spokesman, "told the President that the war was over," and made inquiries about the measures and conditions necessary to secure peace. Speaking for Virginia, he "urged him to consult and counsel with her public men, and her citizens, as to the restoration of peace, civil order, and the renewal of her relations as a member of the
Ibid. Union."

In his pamphlet, written from memory long afterwards, Campbell states that Mr. Lincoln replied "that my general principles were right, the trouble was how to apply them"; and no conclusion was reached except to appoint another interview for the following day on board the *Malvern*. This second interview was accordingly held on Wednesday, April 5, Campbell taking with him only a single citizen of Richmond, as the others to whom he sent invitations were either absent from the city or declined to accompany him. General Weitzel was again present as a witness. The conversation apparently took a wide range on the general topic of restoring local governments in the South, in the course of which the President gave Judge Campbell a written memorandum,[1] embracing an outline of

CHAP. XI.

1865.

[1] "As to peace, I have said before, and now repeat, that three things are indispensable:

"1. The restoration of the national authority throughout the United States.

"2. No receding by the Executive of the United States on the slavery question from the position assumed thereon in the late annual message, and in preceding documents.

"3. No cessation of hostilities short of an end of the war, and the disbanding of all forces hostile to the Government. That all propositions coming from those now in hostility to the Government, not inconsistent with the foregoing, will be respectfully considered and passed upon in a spirit of sincere liberality.

"I now add that it seems useless for me to be more specific with those who will not say that they are ready for the indispensable terms, even on conditions to be named by themselves. If there be any who are ready for these indispensable terms, on any conditions whatever, let them say so, and state their conditions, so that the conditions can be known and considered. It is further added, that the remission of confiscation being within the executive power, if the war be now further persisted in by those opposing the Government, the making of confiscated property at the least to bear the additional cost will be insisted on, but that confiscations (except in case of third party intervening interests) will be remitted to the people of any State which shall now promptly and in good faith withdraw its troops from further resistance to the Government. What is now said as to the remission of confiscation has no reference to supposed property in slaves."

President Lincoln, Memorandum printed in Campbell Pamphlet, pp. 9, 10.

CHAP. XI. conditions of peace which repeated in substance the terms he had proffered the rebel commissioners (of whom Campbell was one) at the Hampton Roads Conference on the 3d of February, 1865. The only practical suggestion which was made has been summarized as follows by General Weitzel in a statement written from memory, as the result of the two interviews: "Mr. Campbell and the other gentlemen assured Mr. Lincoln that if he would allow the Virginia Legislature to meet, it would at once repeal the ordinance of secession, and that then General Robert E. Lee and every other Virginian would submit; that this would amount to the virtual destruction of the Army of Northern Virginia, and eventually to the surrender of all the other rebel armies, and would insure perfect peace in the shortest possible time."

Weitzel, in "Philadelphia Times."

Out of this second conference, which also ended without result, President Lincoln thought he saw an opportunity to draw an immediate and substantial military benefit. On the next day (April 6) he wrote from City Point, where he had returned, the following letter to General Weitzel, which he immediately transmitted to the general by the hand of Senator Morton S. Wilkinson, in whose presence he wrote it, and who was on his way from City Point to Richmond:

1865.

> It has been intimated to me that the gentlemen who have acted as the Legislature of Virginia in support of the rebellion may now desire to assemble at Richmond, and take measures to withdraw the Virginia troops and other support from resistance to the General Government. If they attempt it, give them permission and protection, until, if at all, they attempt some action hostile to the United States, in which case you will notify them, give

them reasonable time to leave, and at the end of which time arrest any who remain. Allow Judge Campbell to see this, but do not make it public.

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Lincoln to Weitzel, April 6, 1865. Weitzel, Testimony, Report of Committee on Conduct of the War, 1864–65. Part I., p. 521.

This document bears upon its face the distinct military object which the President had in view in permitting the rebel Legislature to assemble, namely, to withdraw immediately the Virginia troops from the army of Lee, then on its retreat towards Lynchburg. It could not be foreseen that Lee would surrender the whole of that army within the next three days, though it was evident that the withdrawal of the Virginia forces from it, under whatever pretended State authority, would contribute to the ending of the war quite as effectually as the reduction to an equal extent of that army by battle or capture. The ground upon which Lincoln believed the rebel Legislature might take this action is set forth in his dispatch to Grant of the same date, in which he wrote:

Secretary Seward was thrown from his carriage yesterday and seriously injured. This with other matters will take me to Washington soon. I was at Richmond yesterday and the day before, when and where Judge Campbell, who was with Messrs. Hunter and Stephens in February, called on me, and made such representations as induced me to put in his hands an informal paper repeating the propositions in my letter of instructions to Mr. Seward, which you remember, and adding "that if the war be now further persisted in by the rebels, confiscated property shall at the least bear the additional cost, and that confiscation shall be remitted to the people of any State which will now promptly and in good faith withdraw its troops and other support from the resistance to the Government." Judge Campbell thought it not impossible that the rebel legislature of Virginia would do the latter, if permitted, and accordingly I ad-

CHAP. XI.

dressed a private letter to General Weitzel, with permission for Judge Campbell to see it, telling him (General W.) that if they attempt this to permit and protect them, unless they attempt something hostile to the United States, in which case to give them notice and time to leave, and to arrest any remaining after such time. I do not think it very probable that anything will come of this, but I have thought best to notify you, so that if you should see signs you may understand them. From your recent dispatches, it seems that you are pretty effectually withdrawing the Virginia troops from opposition to the Government. Nothing that I have done, or probably shall do, is to delay, hinder, or interfere with your work.

Lincoln to Grant, April 6, 1865.

That Mr. Lincoln well understood the temper of leading Virginians when he wrote that he had little hope of any result from the permission he had given is shown by what followed. When, on the morning of April 7, General Weitzel received the President's letter of the 6th, he showed it confidentially to Judge Campbell, who thereupon called together a committee, apparently five in number, of the Virginia rebel Legislature, and instead of informing them precisely what Lincoln had authorized, namely, a meeting to "take measures to withdraw the Virginia troops and other support from resistance to the General Government," the judge in a letter to the committee (dated April 7) formulated quite a different line of action.

1865.

I have had, since the evacuation of Richmond, two conversations with Mr. Lincoln, President of the United States. . . The conversations had relation to the establishment of a government for Virginia, the requirement of oaths of allegiance from the citizens, and the terms of settlement with the United States. With the concurrence and sanction of General Weitzel he assented to the application not to require oaths of allegiance from the citizens.

GENERAL O. O. HOWARD. GENERAL JOHN A. LOGAN. GENERAL W. B. HAZEN. GENERAL W. T. SHERMAN. GENERAL H. W. SLOCUM. GENERAL JEFF. C. DAVIS.

He stated that he would send to General Weitzel his decision upon the question of a government for Virginia. This letter was received on Thursday, and was read by me. . . The object of the invitation is for the government of Virginia to determine whether they will administer the laws in connection with the authorities of the United States. I understand from Mr. Lincoln, if this condition be fulfilled, that no attempt would be made to establish or sustain any other authority. CHAP. XI. Apl. 7, 1865 Campbell, Pamphlet.

The rest of Campbell's long letter related to safe-conducts, to transportation, and to the contents of the written memorandum handed by Lincoln to him at the interview on the *Malvern* about general conditions of peace. But this memorandum contained no syllable of reference to the "government of Virginia," and bore no relation of any kind to the President's permission to "take measures to withdraw the Virginia troops," except its promise "that confiscations (except in case of third party intervening interests) will be remitted to the people of any State which shall now promptly and in good faith withdraw its troops from further resistance to the Government." Going a step further, the committee next prepared a call inviting a meeting of the General Assembly, announcing the consent of "the military authorities of the United States to the session of the legislature in Richmond," and stating that "The matters to be submitted to the legislature are the restoration of peace to the State of Virginia, and the adjustment of questions involving life, liberty, and property that have arisen in the States as a consequence of the war." When General Weitzel indorsed his approval on the call "for publication in the 'Whig' and in hand-bill form," he does not seem to have read, or if he Ibid.

CHAP. XI. read, to have realized, how completely President Lincoln's permission had been changed and his authority perverted. Instead of permitting them to recall Virginia soldiers, Weitzel was about to allow them authoritatively to sit in judgment on all the political consequences of the war "in the States."

1865. General Weitzel's approval was signed to the call on April 11, and it was published in the "Richmond Whig" on the morning of the 12th. On that day the President, having returned to Washington, was at the War Department writing an answer to a dispatch from General Weitzel, in which the general defended himself against the Secretary's censure for having neglected to require from the churches in Richmond prayers for the President of the United States similar to those which prior to the fall of the city had been offered up in their religious services in behalf of "the rebel chief, Jefferson Davis, before he was driven from the capital." Weitzel contended that the tone of President Lincoln's conversations with him justified the omission. Mr. Lincoln was never punctilious about social or official etiquette towards himself, and he doubtless felt in this instance that neither his moral nor political well-being was seriously dependent upon the prayers of the Richmond rebel churches. To this part of the general's dispatch he therefore answered: "I have seen your dispatches to Colonel Hardie about the matter of prayers. I do not remember hearing prayer spoken of while I was in Richmond, but I have no doubt you acted in what appeared to you to be the spirit and temper manifested by me while there."

Lincoln to Weitzel, April 12, 1865.

Having thus generously assumed responsibility for Weitzel's alleged neglect, the President's next thought was about what the Virginia rebel Legislature was doing, of which he had heard nothing since his return from City Point. He therefore included in this same telegram of April 12 the following inquiry and direction: "Is there any sign of the rebel Legislature coming together on the understanding of my letter to you? If there is any such sign, inform me what it is. If there is no such sign, you may withdraw the offer." CHAP. XI. 1865.

To this question General Weitzel answered briefly, "The passports have gone out for the legislature, and it is common talk that they will come together." It is probable that Mr. Lincoln thought that if after the lapse of five days the proposed meeting had progressed no farther than "common talk," nothing could be expected from it. It would also seem that at this time he must have received, either by telegraph or by mail, copies of the correspondence and call which Weitzel had authorized, and which had been published that morning. The President therefore immediately wrote and sent to General Weitzel a long telegram, in which he explained his course with such clearness that its mere perusal sets at rest all controversy respecting either his original intention of policy or the legal effect of his action and orders, and by a final revocation of the permission he had given brought the incident to its natural and appropriate termination:

I have just seen Judge Campbell's letter to you of the 7th. He assumes, it appears to me, that I have called the insurgent legislature of Virginia together, as the rightful

CHAP. XI. legislature of the State, to settle all differences with the United States. I have done no such thing.[1] I spoke of
Apl. 12, 1865. them not as a legislature, but as "the gentlemen who have acted as the legislature of Virginia in support of the rebellion." I did this on purpose to exclude the assumption that I was recognizing them as a rightful body. I dealt with them as men having power *de facto* to do a specific thing, to wit: "to withdraw the Virginia troops and other support from resistance to the General Government," for which, in the paper handed to Judge Campbell, I promised a special equivalent, to wit: a remission to the people of the State, except in certain cases, of the confiscation of their property. I meant this and no more. Inasmuch, however, as Judge Campbell misconstrues this, and is still pressing for an armistice, contrary to the explicit statement of the paper I gave him, and particularly as General Grant has since captured the Virginia troops, so that giving a consideration for their withdrawal is no longer applicable, let my letter to you and the paper to Judge Campbell both be withdrawn or countermanded, and he be notified of it. Do not now allow them to assemble, but if any have come allow them safe return to their homes.

Lincoln to Weitzel, Apl. 12, 1865. Campbell, Pamphlet.

[1] The account given by Admiral Porter of this transaction, in his "Naval History," p. 799, is evidently written from memory, without consultation of dates or documents, and is wholly inaccurate as well in substance as in detail.

CHAPTER XII

JOHNSTON'S SURRENDER

SHERMAN soon wearied of the civil administration of Savannah and of the adjacent region of Georgia which had suddenly grown loyal. He received in January a visit from the Secretary of War, in which many matters pertaining to the care of captured property and the treatment of reclaimed territory were discussed and settled. But the business which lay nearest to Sherman's heart, and occupied most of his time, was the preparation for his march northward of five hundred miles which was to bring him in upon Grant's left wing to finish the war, either on the banks of the Roanoke or the James. He pushed forward, with his accustomed untiring zeal, the work required to put his magnificent army in position to traverse the wide pine barrens, the spreading swamps, and the deep rivers that lay between him and his goal; and so rapid was his progress that he would have found himself ready to start by the middle of January had it not been for the torrents of rain which fell during that month, swelling the Savannah River out of its bed and flooding the rice fields on its shore for miles around. He made a lodgment meanwhile at Pocotaligo, where the railroad to Charleston

1865.

Sherman, "Memoirs," Vol. II., p. 255.

CHAP. XII. crosses the Combahee, meeting so little resistance as to convince him that there was a sensible diminution of the energy of the Confederates. The weather cleared away bright and cold at the end of
1865. January, and with the opening days of February the great march to the North was begun. Howard commanded the right wing, consisting of the Fifteenth and Seventeenth Army Corps, under Logan and Blair; Slocum the left wing, the Fourteenth
Sherman, "Memoirs." Vol. II., p. 268. Corps, under Jeff. C. Davis, and the Twentieth under A. S. Williams; the cavalry was led by Kilpatrick; a grand total of 60,000 men; added to this Grant had promised him important reënforcements on the way. He had abundant stores, with what he could collect on the march, of food and forage, and ammunition enough for a great battle. Fortunately, this last was never to be used.

The whole campaign in fact is mainly interesting to the military student as one of the most remarkable marches which history records. It amazed the Confederate commanders that Sherman should have thought of advancing before the waters subsided. There is no account of another such march. From Savannah to Goldsboro' is a distance of 425 miles. The country is for the most part low and at that season wet, intersected by innumerable rivers and streams, bordered by swamps, traversed by roads hardly deserving the name, mere quaking causeways in a sea of mud. The advance guard frequently waded through water waist deep. The country was almost as destitute of maps as the region of the Congo; every step forward was made gropingly. At the crossing of the Salkehatchie by Logan's corps, it was found the stream had fifteen channels,

all of which had to be bridged. The roads were impassable to artillery or train wagons until corduroyed; under the heavy weight the logs gradually sank till another layer was necessary, and this toilsome process had to be repeated indefinitely, "bridging chaos for hundreds of miles," as General Cox calls it. There are few instances of equal energy and success in the conquest of physical conditions. General Sherman himself, when it was all over, compared the march northward with the march to the sea, in relative importance as ten to one.

Cox, "The March to the Sea," pp. 171, 172.

He had little except the forces of nature to fight with on the way. By skillfully feigning to right and left he produced the impression that both Charleston and Augusta were threatened, while he marched almost unopposed to Columbia. Charleston being thus turned fell like a ripe fruit into the hands of Dahlgren and Gillmore on the 18th of February; General Hardee hurrying northward to Cheraw, on the Great Peedee. There was nothing like organized resistance at the beginning of the march, even at points where it was expected. When Howard drew near the railroad between Charleston and Augusta, he paused to deploy his leading division to be ready for battle. While thus engaged, a man came galloping down the road, whom he recognized as one of his own foragers, on a white horse, with a rope bridle, shouting, "Hurry up, General, we 've got the railroads." A vital line of communication had been captured by a squad of "bummers," while the generals were preparing for a serious battle. Beauregard and Wade Hampton, who were both in Columbia, had neither the means

1865.

Sherman, "Memoirs," Vol. II., p. 274.

CHAP. XII. 1865. nor the disposition to make any effectual resistance. General Sherman entered the place on the 17th of February. That night a great part of the town was destroyed by fire, ignited, Sherman says, by the burning cotton bales which had been set on fire by the retreating Confederates. In spite of all that could be done to check the conflagration it raged all night, and left the capital of South Carolina a heap of ashes.[1]

Sherman did everything in his power to relieve the houseless and destitute people; he provided shelter for many, gave five hundred beef cattle to the mayor, and took measures to maintain public order after the army should be gone. He destroyed the railroad for many miles, and, after a halt of two days, resumed his march to the North.

After leaving Columbia the country was less difficult and the rate of progress more rapid. With no more delay than was necessary to destroy the railroads of the State, the army pushed on towards the Great Peedee. This was a most important stage in the journey. Sherman felt if he crossed that river prosperously there lay no serious obstacle before him south of the Cape Fear, and that river he expected to find in the possession of the National forces. Hardee, after evacuating Charleston, had established himself in formidable works at Cheraw, but Sherman flanked him out of them with his left

[1] General Wade Hampton and other Confederate writers charge General Sherman with the malicious burning of Columbia. We consider General Sherman's assertion to be a sufficient disproof of this charge. He had, it is true, ordered the public buildings to be destroyed, but he had expressly directed General Howard to "spare libraries, asylums, and private dwellings." Any one acquainted with Sherman's character would believe that if he had ordered the town to be destroyed he would have admitted and defended the act.

GENERAL WADE HAMPTON.

wing, and the right wing, under Howard, crossed the Peedee and took the town on the 3d of March, with 28 pieces of artillery, 3000 small arms, and a great quantity of stores. Hardee and Hampton retreated rapidly to Fayetteville, on the Cape Fear; Sherman following with equal celerity entered that place on the 11th, and established communications with the splendid force which Schofield had brought from Tennessee to the North Carolina coast. At Fayetteville Sherman destroyed the arsenal with all its valuable machinery. If he could have foreseen the speedy close of the war this would not have been done. There was now apparently no obstruction to the concentration of all his forces at Goldsboro', a place of the utmost value and importance; being the point where the railroads running from the coast to the Tennessee mountains, and from Wilmington to Richmond, crossed each other — to hold which was sooner or later to strangle the Confederate army in Virginia.

But Sherman was not to accomplish this final stage of his last great march without meeting a more determined resistance than he had as yet encountered. Beauregard, who was enfeebled by long illness, in body and mind, had been superseded on the 23d of February by General Joseph E. Johnston, who had received from Lee the comprehensive order to "concentrate all available forces and drive back Sherman." He immediately assumed command, not flattering himself that he could defeat his formidable adversary, but determined to do everything in his power to keep his army together in such condition that when the end came he might obtain fair terms of peace.

CHAP. XII. His army, though wholly inadequate to the task of driving back Sherman, was by no means contemptible. It is almost impossible to determine with any accuracy the numbers of the Confederates at this stage of the war; Jefferson Davis, General Johnston, and General Beauregard differ widely; but a careful examination of all their statements and reports indicates that Johnston could command, with Hardee's troops and the remnants of what Thomas had left on foot of Hood's army, something like 30,000 men. He had to give Bragg a portion of this force to oppose the march of Schofield from the coast, and with the rest he did what he could to delay Sherman's inevitable progress.

With the exception of occasional cavalry skirmishes of little importance, in one of which—
1865. on the 10th of March—Hampton surprised and came near capturing Kilpatrick, the two armies came into collision only twice. At Averysboro' on the 16th of March, Slocum, with the left wing, found Hardee intrenched between the Cape Fear and a neighboring swamp. Sherman, riding with that wing, personally directed the brief engagement which ensued; Hardee was driven from his position and retired in the night, and Sherman pursued his march, going to the right to join Howard. General Johnston having by this time come to the conclusion that Sherman was moving upon Goldsboro' concentrated nearly all his force, about 20,000 men, at Bentonville, where on the 19th a severe fight took place between him and Slocum, commanding the left wing of Sherman's army. Slocum, finding the enemy too strong in numbers and position to be swept aside, reported the condition of

things to Sherman, who instantly started for the scene of action, bringing up his right wing to Slocum's support. He found Johnston established on the south side of Mill Creek very much as Hood had found Schofield at Franklin; Johnston's position was even stronger, his whole left being covered by a brook running through a swamp which seemed at first sight impassable. Sherman found among his prisoners representatives of so many brigades and divisions, the phantom relics of Hood's army, that he over-estimated the numbers opposed to him; and therefore instead of at once overpowering Johnston's force he proceeded with unusual caution. CHAP. XII.

On the afternoon of the 21st, General Joseph A. Mower, who held the extreme right of the National line, made his way with great boldness and skill through the difficult swamp in his front, and with two brigades pushed close to the bridges in Johnston's rear. If he had been supported he could have cut off Johnston's retreat. But Sherman did not think it wise to risk a general engagement at that moment, and ordered Mower to withdraw, which he did under the fire of the forces which Johnston hurriedly threw against him. The day's work was the last fight of the two great armies; it elated the Confederates beyond what it was worth; they cannot be made to believe, to this day, that Mower withdrew under orders. Sherman in his "Memoirs" blames himself for not having followed up Mower's success; but the result justified his wise forbearance. The war ended just as soon as it would have done if he had plunged among the swampy thickets at Bentonville, and March, 1865.

Vol. II., p. 304.

BATTLE OF BENTONVILLE, N. C., MARCH 19, 1865.

sacrificed thousands of lives in a murderous grapple with Johnston's veterans. CHAP. XII.

Johnston made good his retreat in the night, and Sherman hurried on to Goldsboro'; he rode into the place at the head of his troops on the 23d, finding that Schofield had arrived there the day before. The grand junction was accomplished, the great Army of the West was once more united; the heroes of Franklin and Nashville shook hands with those who had marched to the sea. Sherman, with his 90,000 veterans, trained to marching and fighting under conditions before unknown to the world, was henceforth not only invincible, but irresistible. The days of the Confederacy were numbered when he rode into Goldsboro'; there was nothing left to do but to gather up the fragments of the revolt. March, 1865.

From every quarter the triumphant legions of the Union were moving to consummate victory. At the same moment that the armies of Sherman and Schofield came together at Goldsboro', two splendidly equipped cavalry expeditions were moving east and south from Thomas's department, the one under J. H. Wilson to the pacification of Alabama, the other, under Stoneman, to destroy Lee's last avenue of supply or escape in the mountainous region where the boundaries of Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee come together. Thomas had already, in the month of December, sent Stoneman with two brigades to sweep East Tennessee clear of the enemy. He then crossed over into Virginia, and ascending the Valley of the Holston to Saltville destroyed the extensive and valuable salt works at that place, the iron manufactories at Marion, and the leadworks of Wythe County. He

CHAP. XII. drove Breckinridge out of the country, and into the Secretaryship of War at Richmond, burnt bridges, twisted rails, and captured some guns and
1865. prisoners. On the 22d of March he started out again, this time moving towards Lynchburg, to head off the expected retreat of Lee. He did not pursue his old track up the Holston, as there was a small Confederate force along that river which might have delayed him; but crossed the Blue Ridge by way of the Watauga, to the Yadkin, and thence turning sharply to the north reached Wytheville without opposition. Here he destroyed a large depot of Confederate supplies, and rendered useless by the 7th of April some ninety miles of railroad to the west of Lynchburg, so that if Lee had broken through Sheridan's lines at Appomattox, he would have met capture or famine immediately
April, 1865. beyond. On the 9th, not knowing what weighty transactions were making the day forever memorable, Stoneman pushed southward, and on the 12th defeated Pemberton and Gardner and captured Salisbury, N. C., with its enormous wealth of stores, accumulated with the utmost toil and pain, in the last throes of the Confederacy, as a reserve stock for Lee's army. He destroyed everything, in accordance with his orders, not aware of the situation which made this havoc unnecessary, and went back to Tennessee.

The ride of Wilson's troopers into Alabama was one of the most important and fruitful expeditions of the war, and justified by its celerity, its boldness, and good judgment the high encomium with which Grant sent Wilson to Thomas. After the battle of Nashville and the dispersion of Hood's army, Wil-

son had passed the rest of the winter in drilling and equipping his force; and he swung loose from the Tennessee River on the 23d of March, with three fine divisions commanded by Generals Eli Long, Emory Upton, and Edward McCook, a train of 250 wagons especially adapted for rapid traveling, and packed with small rations and ammunition; he relied on the country for bread and meat. Arriving at Jasper he received information of the movements of Forrest, who commanded the Confederate forces in his front, which determined him to sacrifice everything to swift marching. He left his trains behind, well guarded, made his men fill their haversacks with food, and pushed on with such relentless energy that the scattered detachments of Forrest could make no stand, nor accomplish any effective concentration against him. He sent flying columns to the right and left to destroy public property and stores, but led his main column so impetuously that even the energetic and rough-riding Forrest could nowhere turn long enough to fight.

At Hillsboro' Wilson reached a bridge so hot on the heels of the enemy that they could not destroy it. Coming to Montevallo on the 31st, he wrought great destruction of iron furnaces and collieries in the few hours he could spare; but still pushed forward, driving the enemy, who, though constantly increased by additional detachments, could not gain time enough to make an effectual resistance. At last Forrest, having collected all his available force in a strong position at Plantersville, six miles north of Selma, gave battle for that important railroad and manufacturing center, and

CHAP. XII. met with a total defeat, his lines being broken and his forces driven helter-skelter into Selma. Wilson wasted not an instant after his victory, although it was won on a day in which he marched twenty-
1865. four miles; at dawn on April 2 he closed in upon Selma and spent the day establishing his lines and searching the works. Richard Taylor had fled in the morning to Demopolis, intending to bring back a relieving force; but it was not Wilson's habit to allow time for this. He assaulted the works late in the evening and carried them at every point after a hot but brief conflict. Forrest escaped in the confusion and joined a portion of his command which had been cut off at Marion by Wilson's swift marching. If the Confederacy had not been already wounded to death, the loss of Selma would have been almost irreparable; their greatest manufacturing arsenal was there, and enormous stores of every kind. Wilson, after destroying everything which could be of advantage to the enemy, moved east on Macon, Georgia, and it was reserved for a detachment of his troops to capture the fugitive Confederate President on his flight towards the Florida coast.

Sherman returned to Goldsboro' from his journey to City Point on the 30th of March; he was able to come by rail from New Berne, so rapidly had the skill of his engineers repaired the ruined road. He set himself at once to the reorganization of his army and the replenishment of his stores, so as to be able to move by the 10th of April, the day agreed upon with Grant — the day after the deluge, as it turned out. He still thought there was a hard campaign with desperate fighting before him; he

GENERAL J. A. MOWER.

superseded Williams by Mower in command of the Twentieth Corps, because he considered the latter superior in tactical fighting qualities. With that vast army, greater than Grant's, under him, supplied now by rail from Morehead and Wilmington with all that the nation's imperial wealth could afford, with the broken rebellion tottering to its fall in every Southern State, he was still as careful and as laborious in every particular of his preparation for his next march as if he were beginning a great war with an equal adversary. He had not comprehended the full measure of his own success. So late as the 24th of March he wrote to Grant, "I feel certain, from the character of the fighting, that we have got Johnston's army afraid of us" — as if that were not natural under the circumstances. Grant, himself, up to the last, remained singularly modest and reserved in his expectations. His mind was full of care on Sherman's account, during all his triumphal march northward. "When I hear that you and Schofield are together," he wrote, "with your back upon the coast, I shall feel that you are entirely safe against anything the enemy can do." Safe — with those armies, the phrase does not sin by exaggeration.

CHAP. XII.

Sherman, "Memoirs." Vol. II., p. 316.

Grant to Sherman, Mar. 16, 1865, Ibid., p. 312.

Even on the 6th of April, when the news of the fall of Richmond and the flight of Lee and the Confederate Government towards Danville reached Goldsboro', Sherman was still unable to understand the full extent of the National triumph. "Of course," he says, "I inferred that General Lee would succeed in making junction with General Johnston, with at least a fraction of his army, somewhere to my front." He admired and respected

1865.

Sherman, "Memoirs." Vol. II., p. 343.

CHAP. XII. Grant, so far as a man might short of idolatry, yet the long habit of respect for Lee led him to think the Confederates would somehow get away. He had, on the day before, drawn up elaborate and detailed orders for the march which was to begin

April, 1865. in earnest on the 12th, and be directed to Warrenton, near the Roanoke River. He now changed his plan and prepared to move straight upon Johnston's army, which was at Smithfield, half way to Raleigh.

He started promptly on the morning of the 10th; the next day he reached Smithfield, finding it abandoned, Johnston having retired to Raleigh, burning his bridges. While these were repairing, Sherman received the great news from Appomattox. He issued a brief and sententious order in his happiest vein: "Glory to God and our country," he said, "and all honor to our comrades in arms toward whom we are marching! A little more labor, a little more toil on our part, the great

Sherman, "Memoirs." Vol. II., p. 344. race is won, and our Government stands regenerated after four long years of war." A young staff officer galloped along the lines of the Army of the Ohio shouting the glorious news to the troops who were lying at ease in the warm spring sunshine on either side of the road. His words were received with wild rejoicing; they meant peace, an end of marching and battle, an end of hatred and strife, a return to home and its loves and duties. The troops broke into strange antics, eminent officers of the highest rank and dignity turned somersaults on the grass. One soldier, as he caught the shouted tidings, yelled back at the galloping Mercury, "You are the man we have been looking for these three years." Even

Captain A. J. Ricks, "How I Carried the News of Lee's Surrender to the Army of the Ohio." Cox, "March to the Sea," p. 213.

the inhabitants of the country shared in the general joy; the worn and weary women caught up their ragged children and cried, "Now father will come home." CHAP. XII.

Sherman, definitely relieved from the apprehension of a junction of the Confederate armies, had now no fear except of a flight and dispersal of Johnston's force into guerrilla bands. If they ran away he felt he could not catch them; the country was too open for that; they could scatter and meet again at appointed rendezvous and continue a partisan warfare indefinitely. He could not be expected to know that this resolute enemy, who had met him on a hundred fields with such undaunted valor, was sick to the heart of war and longing for peace. The desire for more fighting survived only in a group of fugitive politicians, flying from a danger which did not exist, through the pine forests and woodlands of the Carolinas.

Sherman, "Memoirs." Vol. II., p. 344.

Entering Raleigh on the morning of the 13th, Sherman turned his heads of column in the direction of Salisbury and Charlotte, hoping to cut off the southward march of Johnston. He made no great haste, for thinking Johnston superior to him in cavalry he wanted Sheridan to arrive before pushing the Confederates to extremities. He tried to persuade the civil authorities at Raleigh to remain at their posts; but the governor, Zebulon B. Vance, had fled, fearing arrest and imprisonment. The next day Kilpatrick, who was far in front with the cavalry, reported that a flag of truce had arrived with a communication from General Johnston. It reached Sherman in Raleigh; it was dated the 13th of April, and was in these words: "The results of

April, 1865.

CHAP. XII. the recent campaign in Virginia have changed the relative military condition of the belligerents. I am therefore induced to address you, in this form, the inquiry whether, in order to stop the further effusion of blood and devastation of property, you are willing to make a temporary suspension of active operations, and to communicate to Lieutenant-General Grant, commanding the armies of the United States, the request that he will take like action in regard to other armies — the object being to permit the civil authorities to enter into the needful arrangements to terminate the existing war."

Johnston, "Narrative of Military Operations," p. 400.

This proposition, which was simply for an armistice to enable the National and the Confederate Governments to negotiate on equal terms, had been dictated by Jefferson Davis, who had then reached Greensboro' on his flight southward, written down by S. R. Mallory, and merely signed and sent by General Johnston. It was inadmissible, even offensive in its terms; but General Sherman, anxious for peace and incapable of discourtesy to a brave enemy, took no notice of its language, and answered at once in terms so unreserved and so cordial that they probably encouraged the Confederates to ask for better conditions of surrender than they had expected to receive. "I am fully empowered," he said, "to arrange with you any terms for the suspension of further hostilities between the armies commanded by you and those commanded by myself, and will be willing to confer with you to that end." He gave notice that he would limit his advance to certain points, and asked Johnston to stay in his present position pending negotiations. He suggested the Appomattox conditions as a basis of

Ibid.

Sherman, "Memoirs." Vol. II., p. 347.

action; and promised to obtain from Grant and Stoneman a suspension of hostilities. Johnston, who after sending his letter had marched with his army towards Greensboro', received Sherman's reply on the 16th, when he was within a few miles of that place. He hurried to Greensboro' to submit the letter to Jefferson Davis, who was the real principal so far in the negotiation, but found that he had started for Charlotte; and Johnston, therefore, arranged a meeting for noon the next day, the 17th, at the house of a Mr. Bennett on the Raleigh road. CHAP. XII. Apl. 16, 1865.

The two great antagonists, who had dealt each other so many sturdy blows during two years, at last met, not without emotion, which was heightened by Sherman's communicating to Johnston the news he had that morning received of the murder of Mr. Lincoln. The Confederate general expressed his unfeigned sorrow at this calamity, which smote the South, he said, as deeply as the North, and in this mood of sympathy the discussion began.[1] Sherman said frankly that he could not recognize the Confederate civil authority as having any existence, and could neither receive nor transmit to Washington any proposition coming from them. He expressed his ardent desire for an end to devastation, and offered Johnston the same terms offered by Grant to Lee. Johnston replied that he would not be justified in such a capitulation, but suggested that they might arrange the terms of a permanent peace. The suggestion pleased

[1] In our account of this discussion we have relied mainly on General Johnston's "Narrative" which General Sherman indorses as "quite accurate and correct." Sheridan, "Memoirs," Vol. II., p. 350.

CHAP. XII. General Sherman; the prospect of ending the war without the shedding of another drop of blood was so tempting to him that he did not sufficiently consider the limits of his authority in the matter; and besides, his heart was melted at the sight of his gallant adversary so completely at his mercy. He afterwards said in his report of the transaction: "To push an army whose commander had so frankly and honestly confessed his inability to cope with me were cowardly and unworthy of the brave men I led." Questions arising as to a general amnesty and as to the power of Johnston to bring about the surrender of the Confederate forces in Texas consumed the afternoon and the generals parted to meet the next day.

May 9, Sherman, Report Committee on Conduct of the War, 1865. Vol. III., p. 8.

General Sherman, going back to Raleigh, found all his general officers eagerly in favor of the negotiations he had begun, and thus confirmed in his own prepossessions, he renewed the discussion at noon on the 18th. Here he committed a grave error in assenting to Johnston's proposition to introduce John C. Breckinridge into the discussion—not as Secretary of War, they agreed, but as an officer of the general's staff. Reagan, the Confederate Postmaster-General, who was somewhere in the background, sent in a written scheme of capitulation, which Johnston read as a basis of agreement. Sherman at last—after listening to a speech by Breckinridge, seized a pen and wrote with an ease and rapidity which surprised Johnston the following memorandum of agreement: —

Johnston, "Narrative of Military Operations," p. 405.

Apl. 18, 1865. "1. The contending armies now in the field to maintain the *status quo* until notice is given by the

commanding general of any one to its opponent, and reasonable time, — say, forty-eight hours — allowed. CHAP. XII.

"2. The Confederate armies now in existence to be disbanded and conducted to their several State capitals, there to deposit their arms and public property in the State arsenal; and each officer and man to execute and file an agreement to cease from acts of war, and to abide the action of the State and Federal authority. The number of arms and munitions of war to be reported to the Chief of Ordnance at Washington City, subject to the future action of the Congress of the United States, and, in the mean time, to be used solely to maintain peace and order within the borders of the States respectively. Apl. 18, 1865.

"3. The recognition by the Executive of the United States of the several State governments, on their officers and Legislatures taking the oaths prescribed by the Constitution of the United States, and, where conflicting State governments have resulted from the war, the legitimacy of all shall be submitted to the Supreme Court of the United States.

"4. The reëstablishment of all the Federal Courts in the several States, with powers as defined by the Constitution of the United States and of the States respectively.

"5. The people and inhabitants of all the States to be guaranteed, so far as the Executive can, their political rights and franchises, as well as their rights of person and property, as defined by the Constitution of the United States and of the States respectively.

CHAP. XII.

"6. The Executive authority of the Government of the United States not to disturb any of the people by reason of the late war, so long as they live

Apl. 18, 1865.

in peace and quiet, abstain from acts of armed hostility and obey the laws in existence at the place of their residence.

"7. In general terms—the war to cease; a general amnesty, so far as the Executive of the United States can command, on condition of the disbandment of the Confederate armies, the distribution of the arms, and the resumption of peaceful pursuits by the officers and men hitherto composing said armies.

"Not being fully empowered by our respective principals to fulfill these terms, we individually and officially pledge ourselves to promptly obtain

Sherman, "Memoirs." Vol. II., pp. 356, 357.

the necessary authority, and to carry out the above programme."

This agreement was signed by the two generals.

Thus the wisdom of Lincoln's peremptory order to Grant of the 3d of March was completely vindicated; no general in the field could be trusted to make terms of peace involving the future relations of the States with the National Government. On the Confederate side in this affair the military commander had completely effaced himself, while General Sherman, who had begun most properly with the offer of Grant's terms at Appomattox, had in the two days' negotiations set on foot by Jefferson Davis and carried on by Reagan and Breckinridge, ended by making a treaty of peace with the Confederate States. But two things must always be said in his defense. Neither the Government nor General Grant had ever communicated to him the

President's instructions of the 3d of March forbidding Grant to "decide, discuss, or to confer upon any political question"; a neglect for which both were to blame. Secondly, Grant, in overstepping his powers by granting pardon and amnesty to all the officers of Lee's army, had naturally created in Sherman's mind the impression that he might with equal propriety venture upon the exercise of similar powers. He says also in justification of his action, that Mr. Stanton, when at Savannah, had spoken of the terrible financial strain of the war, and had made him believe that the termination of this waste was an object so desirable that great sacrifices should be made to obtain it. CHAP. XII.

But when all possible explanations have been made, the fact remains that General Sherman, though perfectly loyal and subordinate to the civil authorities, so far as obedience to orders was concerned, ready to lay down his life at any moment at their command, had the low opinion of civilians which is so common to soldiers, and thought the generals in the field more competent to make peace or war than the politicians in Washington. A year before he had said to Grant, "Even in the seceded States, your word *now* would go further than a President's proclamation or an act of Congress"; and now, three days after this agreement had been dispatched to Washington for approval, he returned to the political aspect of the matter in a letter to Johnston, referring to the question of slavery, and saying, "Although, strictly speaking, this is no subject of a military convention, yet I am honestly convinced that our simple declaration of a result

Sherman to Grant, Mar. 10, 1864.

Apl. 21, 1865

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Report Committee on Conduct of the War, 1865. Vol. III., p. 16.

will be accepted as good law everywhere. Of course I have not a single word from Washington on this or any other point of our agreement, but I know the effect of such a step by us will be universally accepted."

On the same day these confident words were written the text of the agreement arrived in Washington. The moment Grant read it he saw that it was entirely inadmissible; he submitted it to President Johnson, the Cabinet was hastily called together and the whole negotiation disapproved. General Grant was ordered to give Sherman notice of the disapproval, and to direct him to resume hostilities at once. Lincoln's instructions of the 3d of March were repeated — somewhat tardily, it must be confessed — to Sherman as his rule of action. All this was a matter of course, and even General Sherman could not properly, and perhaps would not, have objected to it. But the calm spirit of Lincoln was now absent from the councils of the Government; and it was not in Andrew Johnson and Mr. Stanton to pass over a mistake like this, even in the case of one of the most illustrious captains of the age. They ordered Grant to proceed at once to Sherman's headquarters, and to direct operations against the enemy, and what was worse than all, Mr. Stanton printed in the newspapers of the country the reasons of the Government for disapproving the agreement expressed in terms of the sharpest censure of General Sherman. This publication did not for some weeks come under General Sherman's eye.

Grant to Sherman, April 21, 1865. Sherman, "Memoirs." Vol. II., p. 360.

April, 1865.

General Grant arrived at Sherman's headquarters on the 24th, and made known to him the Govern-

ment's disapproval of his proceedings. Sherman, with prompt obedience, announced the fact to Johnston, demanded the surrender of his immediate command on the Appomattox terms, pure and simple; and gave forty-eight hours' notice of the termination of the truce. General Johnston had already received, on the same day, from Mr. Davis, at Charlotte, the approval of the Confederate Government for the convention of the 18th. Mr. Davis, before giving his consent to the agreement, required from General Breckinridge, his Secretary of War, a report as to the desirability of ratifying the convention. This report set forth the desperate condition of affairs, the favorable terms proposed, the impossibility of negotiations on equal terms. He therefore advised Mr. Davis to execute the convention so far as it was in his power, and to recommend its acceptance by the States, and finally to "return to the States and the people the trust which you are no longer able to defend." Thinking the war at an end, Johnston had drawn from the Treasury Agent, in his camp, the sum of $39,000 in silver, which he distributed among his troops, each man and officer getting a dollar. So far as he was concerned, the war was certainly over; for he could no longer hold his troops together. Eight thousand of them left their camps and went home in the week of the truce, many of them riding away on the artillery horses and train mules. When Johnston communicated to Mr. Davis the failure of his negotiations and asked instructions, the Confederate President suggested that he disband the infantry with instructions to come together at some rendezvous, and try to escape with the cavalry and

CHAP. XII.

April, 1865.

"Southern Historical Society Papers." Vol. XII., pp. 100–102.

Johnston, "Narrative of Military Operations," p. 410.

CHAP. XII. light guns. This futile and selfish direction General Johnston deliberately and wisely refused to obey. He told General Breckinridge plainly that this plan contemplated merely the safety of the "high civil functionaries," and made no provision for the protection of the people and the prevention of bloodshed among the soldiers. He counseled the immediate flight of President Davis, and added, "Commanders believe the troops will not fight again." Thinking "it would be a great crime to prolong the war," he therefore assumed the responsibility of making an end of strife, and answered Sherman's summons by inviting another conference at Bennett's house, where the two commanders met on the 26th of April, and Johnston surrendered all the Confederate forces in his command, which in territory happened to be coextensive with that of Sherman, on the same terms granted Lee at Appomattox.

"Southern Historical Society Papers." Vol. XII., p. 98.

1865.

By a supplemental agreement, Schofield allowed the Confederates the use of their field transportation to get to their homes, and for use on their farms; each brigade to retain one-seventh of their arms till they arrived at the capital of their State; officers and men to retain their own horses and property; General Canby was requested to give water transportation to those living beyond the Mississippi; besides this, Sherman, when he was informed by the Confederate commander that his supplies were exhausted, gave him 250,000 rations. Never was a beaten enemy treated so like a friend.

Johnston, "Narrative of Military Operations," p. 418.

Sherman instantly made the orders necessary for closing up the work in his department and for starting the troops on their march homeward. The

paroling of the Confederate force occupied about a week. Thirty-seven thousand, officers and men, were paroled in North Carolina — and these were exclusive of the thousands who deserted their camps during the suspension of hostilities; some sixty thousand surrendered as reported by Wilson in Georgia and Florida. General Johnston closes his account of this transaction with these generous words, as creditable to him as to those of whom he writes: "The United States troops that remained in the Southern States on *military* duty conducted themselves as if they thought that the object of the war had been the restoration of the Union. They treated the people around them as they would have done those of Ohio or New York, if stationed among them, as their fellow-citizens."[1] CHAP. XII.

Sherman did not pretend to relish or approve the decision of the Government in regard to his diplomacy. He submitted like a soldier, carried out his orders punctually; but he said to Stanton plainly that the Government had made a mistake. He wrote on the 25th to Grant, then present with him at headquarters, "I now apprehend that the rebel armies will disperse; and instead of dealing with six or seven States, we will have to deal with numberless bands of desperados, headed by such men as Mosby, Forrest, Red Jackson, and others, who know not, and care not for danger and its consequences." He did not know that Forrest had at last got all the fighting he wanted at Wilson's hands, and that Mosby was soon to be a Federal office-holder. Sherman was preparing to

Sherman, "Memoirs," Vol. II., p. 362.

April, 1865.

Ibid.

[1] He adds in a footnote: "This language excludes those of the Freedmen's Bureau."

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go to Savannah to direct the further operations of Wilson's cavalry, when on the 28th he received a New York paper containing Stanton's bulletin in regard to his convention with Johnston. This naturally roused him to great wrath; he wrote an eloquent and fiery defense of his conduct to Grant, but hastened on his journey to Savannah nevertheless, made all needful provision for Wilson, and then returned to find still further cause of indignation. General Grant had transferred his headquarters to Washington, and Halleck had been made commander of the Armies of the Potomac and the James. In this capacity, filled with new zeal on the occasion of the Johnston convention, Halleck had ordered Meade's army, disregarding the truce, to push forward against Johnston and to attack him, regardless of Sherman's orders. These orders, though they were nullified by the surrender, had injudiciously been published. This new insult completed the measure of Sherman's anger. He broke out into open defiance of the authorities who he thought were persecuting him with deliberate malice, and declared in a report to Grant that he would have maintained his truce at any cost of life. When Grant suggested that this was uncalled for, and offered him an opportunity to correct the report, Sherman refused to do so, avowing his readiness to obey all future orders of the President and the General, but insisting that his record should stand as written. He declined to meet Halleck in Richmond and warned him to keep out of his way, and on arriving in Washington publicly refused the proffered hand of Stanton at the grand review of the armies.

Bowers to Sherman, and Sherman to Bowers, May 25 and 26, 1865. Report Committee on Conduct of the War, 1865. Vol. III., p. 20.

CHAPTER XIII

THE CAPTURE OF JEFFERSON DAVIS

WHEN Jefferson Davis and the remnant of the Confederate Cabinet, with the more important of their department archives, left Richmond on the night of April 2, in consequence of Lee's retreat, they proceeded to Danville, southwest of Richmond, arriving there the following morning. In a conference between Davis and Lee, in which the probability of abandoning Richmond was discussed, they had agreed upon this point at which to endeavor to unite the armies of Lee and Johnston, first to attack and beat Sherman and then return and defeat Grant. But Grant, so far from permitting Lee to execute the proposed junction, did not even allow him to reach Danville. Lee had been pressed so hard that he had not found opportunity to inform Davis where he was going, and this absence of news probably served to give Davis an intimation that their preconcerted plans were not likely to reach fulfillment. Nevertheless, the rebel President made a show of confidence; rooms were obtained, and, he says, the "different departments resumed their routine labors," though it may be doubted whether in these labors they earned the compensation which the Confederate States promised them.

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Two days after his arrival at Danville, Jefferson Davis added one more to his many rhetorical efforts to "fire the Southern heart." On the 5th he issued a proclamation, in which, after reciting the late disasters in as hopeful a strain as possible, he broke again into his never-failing grandiloquence:

> We have now entered upon a new phase of the struggle. Relieved from the necessity of guarding particular points, our army will be free to move from point to point, to strike the enemy in detail far from his base. Let us but will it and we are free.
>
> Animated by that confidence in your spirit and fortitude which never yet failed me, I announce to you, fellow-countrymen, that it is my purpose to maintain your cause with my whole heart and soul; that I will never consent to abandon to the enemy one foot of the soil of any of the States of the Confederacy; that Virginia — noble State, whose ancient renown has been eclipsed by her still more glorious recent history; whose bosom has been bared to receive the main shock of this war; whose sons and daughters have exhibited heroism so sublime as to render her illustrious in all time to come — that Virginia, with the help of the people and by the blessing of Providence, shall be held and defended, and no peace ever be made with the infamous invaders of her territory.
>
> If, by the stress of numbers, we should be compelled to a temporary withdrawal from her limits or those of any other border State, we will return until the baffled and exhausted enemy shall abandon in despair his endless and impossible task of making slaves of a people resolved to be free.

Davis, "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government," Vol. II., p. 677.

In his book, Davis is frank enough to admit that this language, in the light of subsequent events, may fairly be said to have been oversanguine. He probably very soon reached this conviction, for almost before the ink was dry on the document a son of General Henry A. Wise, escaping through the Federal lines on a swift horse, brought him infor-

GENERAL JAMES H. WILSON.

mation of the surrender of Lee's army to Grant. Rumor also reaching him that the Federal cavalry was pushing southward west of Danville, the Confederate Government again hastily packed its archives into a railroad train and moved to Greensboro', North Carolina. Its reception at this place was cold and foreboding. The headquarters of the government remained on the train at the depot. Only Jefferson Davis, and Secretary Trenholm who was ill, were provided with lodgings. From this point Davis sent a dispatch to General Johnston, soliciting a conference, either at Greensboro' or at the general's headquarters; and in response to this request Johnston went without delay to Greensboro', arriving there on the morning of April 12. Within an hour or two both Generals Johnston and Beauregard were summoned to meet the Confederate President in a council of war, there being also present the members of the rebel Cabinet, namely: Benjamin, Secretary of State; Mallory, Secretary of the Navy, and Reagan, Postmaster-General. The meeting was held in a room some twelve by sixteen feet in size, on the second floor of a small dwelling, and contained a bed, a few chairs, and a table with writing-materials.

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Frank H. Alfriend, "Life of Jefferson Davis," p. 623.

The infatuation under which Davis had plunged his section into rebellion against the Government, pitting the South, with its disparity of numbers[1] and resources against the North, still beset him in the hour of her collapse and the agony of her surrender. He had figured out how the united armies of Lee

1 "Dividing their free population between the two sections, and the odds were six and a half millions against twenty and a half millions."— Alfriend, "Life of Jefferson Davis," p. 573.

CH. XIII. and Johnston could successively demolish Sherman and Grant, but he could not grasp the logic of common sense that by the same rule the united armies of Grant and Sherman would make short work of Johnston alone whenever they could reach him. The spirit of obstinate confidence with which he Apl. 12, 1865. entered upon the interview may be best inferred from the description of it, written by the two principal actors themselves. Davis says: "I did not think we should despair. We still had effective armies in the field, and a vast extent of rich and productive territory both east and west of the Mississippi, whose citizens had evinced no disposition to surrender. Ample supplies had been collected in the railroad depots, and much still remained to be placed at our disposal when needed by the army in North Carolina. . . My motive, therefore, in holding an interview with the senior generals of the army in North Carolina was not to learn their opinion as to what might be done by negotiation with the United States Government, but to derive from them information in regard to the army under their command, and what it was feasible and advisable to do as a military problem."

Davis, "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government." Vol. II., pp. 679, 680.

Johnston's statement shows still more distinctly how impossible it was for Davis to lay aside the airs of dictator: "We had supposed that we were to be questioned concerning the military resources of our department, in connection with the question of continuing or terminating the war. But the President's object seemed to be to give, not to obtain, information; for, addressing the party, he said that in two or three weeks he would have a large army in the field by bringing back into the ranks those

who had abandoned them in less desperate circumstances, and by calling out the enrolled men whom the conscript bureau with its forces had been unable to bring into the army. . . Neither opinions nor information was asked, and the conference terminated."

Johnston, "Narrative of Military Operations," pp. 396, 397.

Pollard, the Southern historian, is probably not far wrong in saying that this "was an interview of inevitable embarrassment and pain. The two generals [Johnston and Beauregard] were those who had experienced most of the prejudice and injustice of the President; he had always felt aversion for them, and it would have been an almost impossible excess of Christian magnanimity if they had not returned something of resentment and coldness to the man who, they believed, had arrogantly domineered over them and more than once sought their ruin." Now when Davis, without even the preface of asking their opinions, bade these two men resuscitate his military and political power and transform him from a fugitive to a commander-in-chief, it is not to be wondered at that the interview terminated without result.

Pollard, "Life of Jefferson Davis, with a Secret History of the Confederacy," p. 514.

Matters were thus left in an awkward situation for all parties: the rebel chief had no promise of confidence or support; the generals no authority to negotiate or surrender; the Cabinet no excuse to intervene by advice or protest to either party. This condition was, however, opportunely relieved by the arrival during the afternoon of the Secretary of War, Breckinridge, who was the first to bring them the official and undoubted intelligence of the surrender of Lee with his whole army, of which they had hitherto been informed only by

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CH. XIII. rumor, and which they had of course hoped to the last moment might prove unfounded. The fresh news naturally opened up another discussion and review of the emergency between the various individuals, and seems at length to have brought them to a frank avowal of their real feelings to each other in private.

Johnston, "Narrative of Military Operations," p. 397.

Johnston and Beauregard, holding military counsel together, "agreed in the opinion that the Southern Confederacy was overthrown." This opinion Johnston also repeated to Breckinridge and Mallory, both of whom, it would seem, entertained the same view. The absence of anything like full confidence and cordial intimacy between Davis and his advisers is shown by the fact that these two members of his Cabinet were unwilling to tell their chief the truth which both recognized, and urged upon General Johnston the duty of making the unwelcome suggestion "that negotiations to end the war should be commenced." Breckinridge promised to bring about an opportunity; and it was evidently upon his suggestion that Davis called together a second conference of his Cabinet

Ibid., p. 398.

and his generals.

There is a conflict of statement as to when it took place. Both Davis and Mallory in their accounts group together all the incidents as if they occurred at a single meeting, which Mallory places

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on the evening of the 12th, while Johnston's account mentions the two separate meetings, the first on the morning of the 12th, and the second on the morning of the 13th; there being, however, substantial agreement between all as to the points discussed. Of this occasion, so full of historical

interest, we fortunately have the records of two of the participants. General Johnston writes:

Being desired by the President to do it, we compared the military forces of the two parties to the war: ours, an army of about 20,000 infantry and artillery, and 5000 mounted troops; those of the United States, three armies that could be combined against ours, which was insignificant compared with either Grant's of 180,000 men, Sherman's of 110,000 at least, and Canby's of 60,000— odds of seventeen or eighteen to one, which in a few weeks could be more than doubled. I represented that under such circumstances it would be the greatest of human crimes for us to attempt to continue the war; for, having neither money nor credit, nor arms but those in the hands of our soldiers, nor ammunition but that in their cartridge-boxes, nor shops for repairing arms or fixing ammunition, the effect of our keeping the field would be, not to harm the enemy, but to complete the devastation of our country and ruin of its people. I therefore urged that the President should exercise at once the only function of government still in his possession, and open negotiations for peace. The members of the Cabinet present were then desired by the President to express their opinions on the important question. General Breckinridge, Mr. Mallory, and Mr. Reagan thought that the war was decided against us, and that it was absolutely necessary to make peace. Mr. Benjamin expressed the contrary opinion. The latter made a speech for war much like that of Sempronius in Addison's play.

Johnston, "Narrative of Military Operations," pp. 398, 399.

Secretary Mallory's account is even more full of realistic vividness. He represents Davis, after introducing the dreaded topic by several irrelevant subjects of conversation and coming finally to "the situation of the country," as saying:

"Of course we all feel the magnitude of the moment. Our late disasters are terrible, but I do not think we should regard them as fatal. I think we can whip the

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enemy yet, if our people will turn out. We must look at matters calmly, however, and see what is left for us to do. Whatever can be done must be done at once. We have not a day to lose." A pause ensued, General Johnston not seeming to deem himself expected to speak, when the President said, "We should like to hear your views, General Johnston." Upon this the general, without preface or introduction,— his words translating the expression which his face had worn since he entered the room,— said, in his terse, concise, demonstrative way, as if seeking to condense thoughts that were crowding for utterance: "My views are, sir, that our people are tired of the war, feel themselves whipped, and will not fight. Our country is overrun, its military resources greatly diminished, while the enemy's military power and resources were never greater, and may be increased to any desired extent. We cannot place another large army in the field; and, cut off as we are from foreign intercourse, I do not see how we could maintain it in fighting condition if we had it. My men are daily deserting in large numbers, and are taking my artillery teams to aid their escape to their homes. Since Lee's defeat they regard the war as at an end. If I march out of North Carolina, her people will all leave my ranks. It will be the same as I proceed south through South Carolina and Georgia, and I shall expect to retain no man beyond the by-road or cow-path that leads to his house. My small force is melting away like snow before the sun, and I am hopeless of recruiting it. We may perhaps obtain terms which we ought to accept." The tone and manner, almost spiteful, in which the general jerked out these brief, decisive sentences, pausing at every paragraph, left no doubt as to his own convictions. When he ceased speaking, whatever was thought of his statements, — and their importance was fully understood,— they elicited neither comment nor inquiry. The President, who during their delivery had sat with his eyes fixed upon a scrap of paper, which he was folding and refolding abstractedly, and who had listened without a change of position or expression, broke the silence by saying in a low, even tone, "What do you say, General Beauregard?" "I concur in all General Johnston has said," he replied. Another silence, more eloquent of the full appreciation of the condi-

tion of the country than words could have been, succeeded, during which the President's manner was unchanged.

Alfriend, "Life of Jefferson Davis," pp. 623–625.

Davis's optimism had taken an obstinate form, and even after these irrefutable arguments and stern decisions he remained unconvinced. He writes that he "never expected a Confederate army to surrender while it was able either to fight or to retreat"; but, sustained only by the sophomoric eloquence of Mr. Benjamin, he had no alternative. He inquired of Johnston how terms were to be obtained; to which the latter answered, by negotiation between military commanders, proposing that he should be allowed to open such negotiations with Sherman. To this Davis consented, and, upon Johnston's suggestion, Secretary Mallory took up a pen and, at Davis's dictation, wrote down the letter to Sherman which we have quoted elsewhere, and the results of which have been related. The council of war over, General Johnston returned to his army to begin negotiations with Sherman. On the following day, April 14, Davis and his party, without waiting to hear the result, left Greensboro' to continue their journey southward.

Davis, "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government." Vol. II., p. 682.

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Alfriend, "Life of Jefferson Davis," p. 625.

Burton N. Harrison, in "The Century," Nov., 1883, pp. 134, 137

The dignity and resources of the Confederate Government were rapidly shrinking; railroad travel had ceased on account of burned bridges, and it could no longer even maintain the state enjoyed in its car at Greensboro'. We are not informed what became of the archives; its personnel — President, Cabinet, and sundry staff officers — scraped together a lot of miscellaneous transportation, composed of riding horses, ambulances, and other vehicles, which, over roads rendered almost impassable by mud, made their progress to the last degree vexa-

CH. XIII. tious and toilsome. The country was so full of fugitives that horse-stealing seems to have become for the time an admitted custom and privilege. We have the statement of Davis's private secretary that eight or ten young Mississippians, one of them an officer, who volunteered to become the rebel President's body-guard, equipped themselves by "pressing" the horses of neighboring farmers, rendering necessary a premature and somewhat sudden departure in advance of the official party. Obtaining shelter by night when they could, and camping at other times, the distinguished fugitives made their way to Charlotte, North Carolina, where they arrived on the 18th of April.

Burton N. Harrison, in "The Century," Nov., 1883. p. 133.

1865.

Since the Confederate Government had considerable establishments at Charlotte, orders were dispatched to the quartermaster to prepare accommodations; and this request was reasonably satisfied for all the members of the party except its chief. The quartermaster met them near the town and "explained that, though quarters could be furnished for the rest of us, he had as yet been able to find only one person willing to receive Mr. Davis, saying the people generally were afraid that whoever entertained him would have his house burned by the enemy; that, indeed, it was understood threats to that effect had been made everywhere by Stoneman's cavalry. There seemed to be nothing to do but to go to the one domicile offered. It was on the main street of the town, and was occupied by Mr. Bates, a man said to be of Northern birth, a bachelor of convivial habits, the local agent of the Southern Express Company, apparently living alone with his negro servants, and

keeping a sort of 'open house,' where a broad, well-equipped sideboard was the most conspicuous feature of the situation—not at all a seemly place for Mr. Davis."

Burton N. Harrison, in "The Century," Nov., 1883, p. 136.

Mr. Davis was perforce obliged to accept this entertainment; and whether he failed to realize the significance of such treatment or whether he was moved by his suppressed indignation to a defiant self-assertion, when a detachment of rebel cavalry passing along the street saluted him with cheers and called him out for a speech, after the usual compliments to soldiers, he "expressed his own determination not to despair of the Confederacy, but to remain with the last organized band upholding the flag." And this feeling he again emphasized during his stay in Charlotte by a remark to his private secretary, "I *cannot* feel like a beaten man."

Ibid.

The stay at Charlotte was prolonged, evidently to wait for news from Johnston's army. No information came till April 23, when Breckinridge, Secretary of War, arrived, bringing the memorandum agreement made by Sherman and Johnston on the 18th. The memorandum seems to have been discussed at a Cabinet meeting held on the morning of the 24th, and Mr. Davis yielded to the advice they all gave him to accept and ratify the agreement. He wrote a letter to that effect, but almost immediately received further information, which Sherman communicated to Johnston, that the Washington authorities had rejected the terms and agreement, and directed Sherman to continue his military operations, and that Sherman had given notice to terminate the armistice. This

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"Southern Historical Society Papers," Vol. XII., pp. 100, 102.

Davis, "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government," Vol. II., p. 688.

CH. XIII change, coupled with the news of the assassination of President Lincoln, which the party had received on their arrival in Charlotte, stimulated the hopes of the rebel President, and he sent back instructions to Johnston to disband his infantry and retreat southward with so much of his cavalry and light artillery as he could bring away. Against the daily evidence of his own observation and the steady current of advice from his followers, he was still dreaming of some romantic or miraculous renewal of his chances and fortunes. And in his book, written fifteen years afterward, he makes no attempt to conceal his displeasure that General Johnston refused to obey his desperate and futile orders.

April, 1865. The armistice expired on the 26th, and the fugitive Confederate Government once more took up its southward flight. At starting, the party still made show of holding together. There were the President, most of the members of the Cabinet, several staff officers, and fragments of six cavalry brigades, counting about two thousand, which had escaped in small parties from Johnston's surrender. This was enough to form a respectable escort. There was still talk of the expedition turning westward and making its way across the Mississippi to join Kirby Smith and Magruder. But the meager accounts plainly indicate that Davis's advisers fed his hope for politeness' sake, or to furnish the only pastime with which it was possible to relieve the tedium of their journey; for as they proceeded the expedition melted away as if by enchantment. Davis directed his course toward Abbeville, South Carolina. Mr. Mallory records

that though they had met no enemy, "At Abbeville the fragments of disorganized cavalry commands, which had thus far performed, in some respects, an escort's duty, were found to be reduced to a handful of men, anxious only to reach their homes as early as practicable, and whose services could not further be relied on. . . Almost every cross-road witnessed the separation of comrades in arms, who had long shared the perils and privations of a terrific struggle, now seeking their several homes to resume their duties as peaceful citizens."

Alfriend, "Life of Jefferson Davis," p. 630.

The members of the Cabinet, except Reagan, also soon dropped off on various pretexts. Benjamin decided to pursue another route, Breckinridge remained behind with the cavalry at the crossing of the Savannah River and never caught up. At Washington, Georgia, a little further on, Mallory halted "to attend to the needs of his family." Davis waited a whole day at Washington, and finding that neither troops nor leaders appeared, the actual situation seems at last to have dawned upon him. "I spoke to Captain Campbell of Kentucky, commanding my escort," he writes, "explained to him the condition of affairs, and telling him that his company was not strong enough to fight, and too large to pass without observation, asked him to inquire if there were ten men who would volunteer to go with me without question wherever I should choose." With these, two officers, three members of his personal staff, and Postmaster-General Reagan, he pushed ahead, still nursing his project of crossing the Mississippi River.

Davis, "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government." Vol. II., p. 695.

CH. XIII. Davis's private secretary had been sent ahead to join Mrs. Davis and her family party at Abbeville, South Carolina, and they continued their journey, in advance, with a comfortable wagon train. After passing Washington, in Georgia, reports of pursuit by Federal cavalry increased, and a more ominous rumor gained circulation that a gang of disbanded Confederates was preparing to plunder the train under the idea that it carried a portion of the official treasure. Apprehension of this latter danger induced the Confederate President to hurry forward and overtake his family, and during three days he traveled in their company. It seems to have been a dismal journey; the roads were bad, heavy storms were prevailing; signs of danger and prospects of capture were continually increasing, and they were sometimes compelled to start at midnight and push on through driving rain to make good their concealed flight.

1865. They halted about five o'clock in the afternoon of May 9, to camp and rest in the pine woods by a small stream in the neighborhood of Irwinville, Irwin County, near the middle of Southern Georgia. Here the situation was discussed, and it became clear that any hope of reaching the trans-Mississippi country was visionary. The determination was finally arrived at to proceed to the east coast of Florida, and by means of a small sailing vessel, stated to be in readiness, endeavor to gain the Texas coast by sea. It was also agreed that Davis should at once leave his family and push ahead with a few companions. Davis explains that he and his special party did not start ahead at nightfall, as had been arranged, because a rumor reached him that the

expected rebel marauders would probably attack the camp that night, and that he delayed his departure for the protection of the women and children, still intending, however, to start during the night. With this view, his own and other horses remained saddled and ready. But the camp was undisturbed, and fatigue seems to have held its inmates in deep slumber until dawn of May 10, when, by a complete surprise, a troop of Federal cavalry suddenly captured the whole party and camp. There is naturally some variance in the accounts of the incident, but the differences are in the shades of coloring rather than in the essential facts.

Two expeditions had been sent from Macon by General James H. Wilson in pursuit of Jefferson Davis and his party — the one to scour the left, the other the right bank of the Ocmulgee River; one, under Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Harnden, commanding the 1st Wisconsin Cavalry, starting on the 6th, and the other, under Lieutenant-Colonel B. D. Pritchard, commanding the 4th Michigan Cavalry, starting on the 7th of May. Following different routes, these two officers met at the village of Abbeville, Georgia, in the afternoon of May 9, where they compared notes and decided to continue the pursuit by different roads. As the chase grew hot, smaller detachments from each party spurred on, learned the location of the slumbering camp, and posted themselves in readiness to attack it at daylight, but remained unconscious of each other's proximity.

The fugitives' camp was in the dense pine woods a mile and a half north of Irwinville. Pritchard had reached this village after midnight, obtained

CH. XIII. information about the camp, and procured a negro boy to guide them to it. Approaching to within half a mile, he halted, both to wait for daylight and to send his lieutenant, Purinton, with twenty-five dismounted men to gain the rear of the camp, but cautioning him that a part of Harnden's command would in all probability approach from that direction, and that he must avoid a conflict with them.

May 10, 1865. "At daybreak," writes Captain G. W. Lawton of Pritchard's force, "the order was passed in a whisper to make ready to enter the camp. The men were alive to the work. Mounting their horses, the column moved at a walk until the tents came in sight, and then, at the word, dashed in. The camp was found pitched on both sides of the road. On the left hand, as we entered, were wagons, horses, tents, and men; on the right were two wall-tents, fronting from the road. All was quiet in the camp. We encountered no guards; if there were any out, they must have been asleep."

G. W. Lawton, in "The Atlantic," Sept., 1865, p. 344.

Just at this instant, however, firing was heard back of the camp, where Purinton had been sent. This created instant confusion, and Pritchard with most of his force rushed forward through the camp to resist a supposed Confederate attack. It turned out that, despite the precautions taken, the detachment of Pritchard's men under Purinton (the 4th Michigan) had met a detachment of Harnden's men (the 1st Wisconsin), and in the darkness they had mistaken and fired on each other, causing two deaths and wounding a number.

The rush of the cavalry and the firing of course aroused the sleepers, and as they emerged from their tents there was a moment of confusion,

during which only one or two Federal soldiers remained in the camp. One of these had secured Davis's horse, which had stood saddled since the previous evening, and which a colored servant had just brought to his tent. Of what ensued, we give Mr. Davis's own account:

Lawton, in "The Atlantic," Sept., 1865, p. 344.

I stepped out of my wife's tent and saw some horsemen, whom I immediately recognized as cavalry, deploying around the encampment. I turned back and told my wife these were not the expected marauders, but regular troopers. She implored me to leave her at once. I hesitated, from unwillingness to do so, and lost a few precious moments before yielding to her importunity. My horse and arms were near the road on which I expected to leave, and down which the cavalry approached; it was, therefore impracticable to reach them. I was compelled to start in the opposite direction. As it was quite dark in the tent, I picked up what was supposed to be my "raglan," a waterproof light overcoat, without sleeves; it was subsequently found to be my wife's, so very like my own as to be mistaken for it; as I started, my wife thoughtfully threw over my head and shoulders a shawl. I had gone perhaps fifteen or twenty yards when a trooper galloped up and ordered me to halt and surrender, to which I gave a defiant answer, and dropping the shawl and raglan from my shoulders advanced toward him; he leveled his carbine at me, but I expected, if he fired, he would miss me, and my intention was in that event to put my hand under his foot, tumble him off on the other side, spring into his saddle and attempt to escape. My wife, who had been watching, when she saw the soldier aim his carbine at me, ran forward and threw her arms around me. Success depended on instantaneous action, and recognizing that the opportunity had been lost I turned back, and, the morning being damp and chilly, passed on to a fire beyond the tent.[1]

May 10, 1865.

Davis, "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government," pp. 701, 702.

[1] It is but just to give the following narrative of Captain G. W. Lawton of the 4th Michigan Cavalry. It was printed in "The Atlantic Monthly" for September, 1865, and the reader may

CH. XIII. May 10, 1864.

Colonel Pritchard relates in his official report: "Upon returning to camp I was accosted by Davis from among the prisoners, who asked if I was the officer in command, and upon my answering him that I was, and asking him whom I was to call him,

profitably compare it with Jefferson Davis's own narrative which is quoted in the text.

"Andrew Bee, a private of Company L went to the entrance of Davis's tent, and was met by Mrs. Davis, 'bareheaded and barefoot,' as he describes her, who, putting her hand on his arm, said:

"'Please don't go in there till my daughter gets herself dressed.'

"Andrew thereupon drew back, and in a few minutes a young lady (Miss Howell) and another person, bent over as with age, wearing a lady's 'waterproof,' gathered at the waist, with a shawl drawn over the head, and carrying a tin pail, appear, and ask to go to 'the run' for water. Mrs. Davis also appears, and says:

"'For God's sake, let my old mother go to get some water!'

"No objections being made, they passed out. But sharp eyes were upon the singular looking 'old mother.' Suddenly, Corporal Munyer of Company C, and others, at the same instant, discovered that the 'old mother' was wearing very heavy boots for an aged female, and the corporal exclaimed:

"'That is not a woman! Don't you see the boots?' and spurring his horse forward and cocking his carbine, compelled the withdrawal of the shawl, and disclosed Jeff. Davis.

"As if stung by this discovery of his unmanliness, Jeff. struck an attitude, and cried out:

"'Is there a man among you? If there is, let me see him!'

"'Yes,' said the corporal, 'I am one; and if you stir, I will blow your brains out!'

"'I know my fate,' said Davis, 'and might as well die here.'

"But his wife threw her arms around his neck, and kept herself between him and the threatening corporal.

"No harm, however, was done him, and he was generally kindly spoken to; he was only stripped of his female attire.

"As a man he was dressed in a complete suit of gray, a light felt hat, and high cavalry boots, with a gray beard of about six weeks' growth covering his face.

"He said he thought that our Government was too magnanimous to hunt women and children that way.

"When Colonel Pritchard told him that he would do the best he could for his comfort, he answered:

"'I ask no favors of you.'

"To which surly reply the colonel courteously responded by assuring him of kind treatment.

"Arrangements were forthwith made to return to Macon. . .

"The members of Davis's staff submitted with better grace than he to the capture and march, and were generally quite communicative."

GENERAL ULYSSES S. GRANT.

From a photograph taken in 1875.

he replied that I might call him what or whomsoever I pleased. When I replied to him that I would call him Davis, and after a moment's hesitation he said that was his name, he suddenly drew himself up in true royal dignity and exclaimed, 'I suppose that you consider it bravery to charge a train of defenseless women and children, but it is theft, it is vandalism!'"

Pritchard to Stanton, May 25, 1865.

That the correctness of the report may not be questioned, we add the corroborating statement of Postmaster-General Reagan, the sole member of the rebel Cabinet remaining with the party: "Colonel Pritchard did not come up for some time after Mr. Davis was made a prisoner. When he rode up there was a crowd, chiefly of Federal soldiers, around Mr. Davis. He was standing, and dressed in the suit he habitually wore. He turned toward Colonel Pritchard and asked, 'Who commands these troops?' Colonel Pritchard replied, without hesitation, that he did. Mr. Davis said to him, 'You command a set of thieves and robbers. They rob women and children.' Colonel Pritchard then said, 'Mr. Davis, you should remember that you are a prisoner.' And Mr. Davis replied: 'I am fully conscious of that. It would be bad enough to be the prisoner of soldiers and gentlemen. I am still lawful game, and would rather be dead than be your prisoner.'"

J. H. Reagan, in "Annals of the War," p. 155.

Colonel Pritchard's official report gives the following list of the persons who fell into his hands: "I ascertained that we had captured Jefferson Davis and family (a wife and four children); John H. Reagan, his Postmaster-General; Colonels Harrison and Lubbock, A. D. C. to Davis; Burton N.

CH. XIII. Harrison, his private secretary; Major Maurin and Captain Moody, Lieutenant Hathaway; Jeff. D. Howell, midshipman in the rebel navy, and twelve private soldiers; Miss Maggie Howell, sister of Mrs. Davis; two waiting maids, one white and one black, and several other servants. We also captured five wagons, three ambulances, about fifteen horses, and from twenty-five to thirty mules. The train was mostly loaded with commissary stores and private baggage of the party."

The details of the return march are unnecessary; there is no allegation that the prisoners were ill
1865. treated. They arrived at Macon on May 13, both captors and prisoners having on the way first learned of the offer of a reward of one hundred thousand dollars for Davis's apprehension on the charge of having been an accomplice in the assassination of President Lincoln.

The assumption of Davis's guilt, and the proclamation offering the reward, were not based upon mere public excitement, but upon testimony given by witnesses who appeared before the Bureau of Military Justice, and which seemed conclusively to prove that the rebel President had taken part in that dreadful conspiracy. But this evidence was found to be untrustworthy; upon an investigation held by a Committee of Congress about a year later, several of these witnesses retracted their statements and declared that their testimony as given originally was false in every particular. No prosecution on this charge was therefore begun against Davis; but after an imprisonment of about two years in Fort Monroe, he was indicted and arraigned at Richmond before the United States Circuit Court for

the District of Virginia for the crime of treason, and liberated on bail, Horace Greeley, Gerritt Smith, and Cornelius Vanderbilt having volunteered to become his principal bondsmen.

On the 3d of December, 1868, a motion was made to quash the indictment on the ground that the penalties and disabilities denounced against and inflicted on him for his alleged offense, by the third section of the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States, were a bar to any proceedings upon such indictment. The court, consisting of Chief-Justice Chase and Judge John C. Underwood, considered the motion, and two days later announced that they disagreed in opinion, and certified the question to the Supreme Court of the United States. Though not announced, it was understood that the Chief-Justice held the affirmative and Judge Underwood the negative.

Three weeks from that day President Johnson bestowed upon Mr. Davis and those who had been his followers a liberal and fraternal Christmas gift. On the 25th of December, 1868, he issued a proclamation supplementing the various prior proclamations of amnesty, which declared "unconditionally and without reservation, to all and to every person who directly or indirectly participated in the late insurrection or rebellion, a full pardon and amnesty for the offense of treason against the United States, or of adhering to their enemies during the late civil war, with restoration of all rights, privileges, and immunities, under the Constitution and the laws which have been made in pursuance thereof." The Government of course took no further action in the suit; and at a subse-

CH. XIII. quent term of the Circuit Court the indictment was dismissed on motion of Mr. Davis's counsel. The ex-President of the Confederate States was thus relieved from all penalties for his rebellion except the disability to hold office imposed by the third section of the Fourteenth Amendment, which Congress refused to remove.

This ended the public career of Jefferson Davis. He returned to his home in Mississippi, where he lived unmolested nearly a quarter of a century after the downfall of his rebellion; emerging from his retirement only by an occasional letter or address. In some of these, as well as in his elaborate work entitled "The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government," very guarded undertones revealed an undying animosity to the Government of the United States, whose destiny he had sought to pervert, whose trusts he had betrayed, whose honors he had repaid by attempting its destruction, and whose clemency he appeared incapable of appreciating even in his defeat. He died at New Orleans on December 6, 1889, while visiting that city.

CHAPTER XIV

THE FOURTEENTH OF APRIL

THE 14th of April was a day of deep and tranquil happiness throughout the United States. It was Good Friday, observed by a portion of the people as an occasion of fasting and religious meditation; but even among the most devout the great tidings of the preceding week exerted their joyous influence, and changed this period of traditional mourning into an occasion of general and profound thanksgiving. Peace, so strenuously fought for, so long sought and prayed for, with prayers uttered and unutterable, was at last near at hand, its dawn visible on the reddening hills. The sermons all day were full of gladness; the Misereres turned of themselves to Te Deums. The country from morning till evening was filled with a solemn joy; but the date was not to lose its awful significance in the calendar: at night it was claimed once more, and forever, by a world-wide sorrow.

The thanksgiving of the nation found its principal expression at Charleston Harbor. A month before, after Sherman had "conquered Charleston by turning his back upon it," the Government resolved that the flag of the Union should receive a conspicuous reparation on the spot where it had

CHAP. XIV. 1865. first been outraged. It was ordered by the President that General Robert Anderson should, at the hour of noon on the 14th day of April, raise above the ruins of Fort Sumter the identical flag lowered and saluted by him four years before. In the absence of General Sherman the ceremonies were in charge of General Gillmore. Henry Ward Beecher, the most famous of the antislavery preachers of the North, was selected to deliver an oration. The surrender of Lee, the news of which arrived at Charleston on the eve of the ceremonies, gave a more transcendent importance to the celebration, which became at once the occasion of a national thanksgiving over the downfall of the rebellion. On the day fixed Charleston was filled with a great concourse of distinguished officers and citizens. Its long-deserted streets were crowded with an eager multitude, and gay with innumerable flags, while the air was thrilled from an early hour with patriotic strains from the many bands, and shaken with the thunder of Dahlgren's fleet, which opened the day by firing from every vessel a national salute of twenty-one guns. By eleven o'clock a brilliant gathering of boats, ships, and steamers of every sort had assembled around the battered ruin of the fort; the whole bay seemed covered with the vast flotilla, planted with a forest of masts, whose foliage was the triumphant banners of the nation. The Rev. Matthias Harris, the same chaplain who had officiated at the raising of the flag over Sumter, at the first scene of the war, offered a prayer; Dr. Richard S. Storrs and the people read, in alternate verses, a selection of psalms of thanksgiving and victory, beginning with these marvelous

words which have preserved for so many ages the very pulse and throb of the joy of redemption: CHAP. XIV.

When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream.

Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing; then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them.

The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad.

Turn again our captivity, O Lord, as the streams in the south.

They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

And at the close, before the Gloria, the people and the minister read all together, in a voice that seemed to catch the inspiration of the hour:

Some trust in chariots and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.

We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners.

General Townsend then read the original dispatch announcing the fall of Sumter, and precisely as the bells of the ships struck the hour of noon, General Anderson, with his own hands seizing the halyards, hoisted to its place the flag which he had seen lowered before the opening guns of rebellion. As the starry banner floated out upon the breeze, which freshened at the moment as if to embrace it, a storm of joyful acclamation burst forth from the vast assembly, mingled with the music of hundreds of instruments, the shouts of the people, and the full-throated roar of great guns from the Union and the captured rebel forts alike, on every side of the

General E. D. Townsend, afterwards Adjutant-General U. S. A.

Apl. 14, 1865.

CHAP. XIV. harbor, thundering their harmonious salute to the restored banner. General Anderson made a brief and touching speech, the people sang "The Star-
APL. 14, 1865. Spangled Banner," Mr. Beecher delivered an address in his best and gravest manner, filled with an earnest, sincere, and unboastful spirit of nationality; with a feeling of brotherhood to the South, prophesying for that section the advantages which her defeat has in fact brought her; a speech as brave, as gentle, and as magnanimous as the occasion demanded. In concluding, he said, and we quote his words, as they embodied the opinion of all men of good will on this last day of Abraham Lincoln's life: "We offer to the President of these United States our solemn congratulations that God has sustained his life and health under the unparalleled burdens and sufferings of four bloody years, and permitted him to behold this auspicious consummation of that national unity for which he has waited with so much patience and fortitude, and for which he has labored with such disinterested wisdom."

At sunset another national salute was fired; the evening was given up to social festivities; the most distinguished of the visitors were entertained at supper by General Gillmore; a brilliant show of fireworks by Admiral Dahlgren illuminated the bay and the circle of now friendly forts, at the very moment when at the capital of the nation a little group of conspirators were preparing the blackest crime which sullies the record of the century.

In Washington also it was a day, not of exultation, but of deep peace and thankfulness. It was the fifth day after the surrender of Lee; the first

effervescence of the intoxicating success had passed away. The President had, with that ever-present sense of responsibility which distinguished him, given his thoughts instantly to the momentous question of the restoration of the Union and of harmony between the lately warring sections. He had, in defiance of precedent and even of his own habit, delivered to the people on the 11th, from the windows of the White House, his well-considered views as to the measures demanded by the times. His whole heart was now enlisted in the work of "binding up the nation's wounds," of doing all which might "achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace." CHAP. XIV. April, 1865.

Grant had arrived that morning in Washington and immediately proceeded to the Executive Mansion, where he met the Cabinet, Friday being their regular day of meeting. He expressed some anxiety as to the news from Sherman, which he was expecting hourly. The President answered him in that singular vein of poetic mysticism which, though constantly held in check by his strong common-sense, formed a remarkable element in his character. He assured Grant that the news would come soon and come favorably, for he had last night had his usual dream which preceded great events. He seemed to be, he said, in a singular and indescribable vessel, but always the same, moving with great rapidity towards a dark and indefinite shore; he had had this dream before Antietam, Murfreesboro', Gettysburg, and Vicksburg. The Cabinet were greatly impressed by this story; but Grant, the most matter-of-fact of created beings, made the characteristic response that "Murfreesboro' was no April 14.

CHAP. XIV. victory, and had no important results." The President did not argue this point with him, but repeated that Sherman would beat or had beaten Johnston; that his dream must relate to that, as he knew of no other important event which was likely at present to occur.[1]

Apl. 14, 1865. The subject of the discussion which took place in the Cabinet on that last day of Lincoln's firm and tolerant rule has been preserved for us in the notes of Mr. Welles. They were written out, it is true, seven years afterwards, at a time when Grant was President, seeking reëlection, and when Mr. Welles had followed Andrew Johnson into full fellowship with the Democratic party. Making whatever allowance is due for the changed environment of the writer, we still find his account of the day's conversation candid and trustworthy. The subject of trade between the States was the first that engaged the attention of the Cabinet. Mr. Stanton wished it to be carried on under somewhat strict military supervision; Mr. Welles was in favor of a more liberal system; Mr. McCulloch, new to the Treasury, and embarrassed by his grave responsibilities, favored the abolition of the Treasury agencies, and above all desired a definite understanding of the purpose of the Government. The President, seeing that in this divergence of views among men equally able and honest there lay the best chance of a judicious arrangement, appointed the three Secretaries as a commission with plenary power to examine the whole subject, announcing

"The Galaxy," April, 1872.

[1] This incident is told by the Hon. Gideon Welles in an article printed in "The Galaxy" for April, 1872. It was frequently related by Charles Dickens with characteristic amplifications. See also "George Eliot's Life." Vol. III., p. 82.

himself as content in advance with their conclusions. CHAP. XIV.

The great subject of the reëstablishment of civil government in the Southern States was then taken up. Mr. Stanton had, a few days before, drawn up a project for an executive ordinance for the preservation of order and the rehabilitation of legal processes in the States lately in rebellion. The President, using this sketch as his text, not adopting it as a whole, but saying that it was substantially the result of frequent discussions in the Cabinet, spoke at some length on the question of reconstruction, than which none more important could ever engage the attention of the Government. It was providential, he thought, that this matter should have arisen at a time when it could be considered, so far as the Executive was concerned, without interference by Congress. If they were wise and discreet, they should reanimate the States and get their governments in successful operation, with order prevailing and the Union reëstablished, before Congress came together in December. The President felt so kindly towards the South, he was so sure of the Cabinet under his guidance, that he was anxious to close the period of strife without overmuch discussion. Apl. 14, 1865.

He was particularly desirous to avoid the shedding of blood, or any vindictiveness of punishment. He gave plain notice that morning that he would have none of it. "No one need expect he would take any part in hanging or killing these men, even the worst of them. Frighten them out of the country, open the gates, let down the bars, scare them off," said he, throwing up his hands as if Welles, in "The Galaxy."

CHAP. XIV. scaring sheep. "Enough lives have been sacrificed; we must extinguish our resentments if we expect harmony and union."[1] He deprecated the
Apl. 14, 1865. disposition he had seen in some quarters to hector and dictate to the people of the South, who were trying to right themselves. He regretted that suffrage, under proper arrangement, had not been given to negroes in Louisiana, but he held that their constitution was in the main a good one. He was averse to the exercise of arbitrary powers by the Executive or by Congress. Congress had the undoubted right to receive or reject members; the Executive had no control in this; but the Executive could do very much to restore order in the States, and their practical relations with the Government, before Congress came together.

Mr. Stanton then read his plan for the temporary military government of the States of Virginia and North Carolina, which for this purpose were combined in one department. This gave rise at once to extended discussion, Mr. Welles and Mr. Dennison opposing the scheme of uniting two States under one government. The President closed the session by saying the same objection had occurred to him, and by directing Mr. Stanton to revise the document and report separate plans for the government of the two States. He did not wish the autonomy nor the individuality of the States de-

[1] Near the close of the war his old friend, Joseph Gillespie, asked him what was to be done with the rebels. He answered, after referring to the vehement demand prevalent in certain quarters for exemplary punishment, by quoting the words of David to his nephews, who were asking for vengeance on Shimei because "he cursed the Lord's anointed": "What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah, that ye should this day be adversaries unto me? Shall there any man be put to death this day in Israel?"

stroyed. He commended the whole subject to the most earnest and careful consideration of the Cabinet; it was to be resumed on the following Tuesday; it was, he said, the great question pending — they must now begin to act in the interest of peace. CHAP. XIV.

These were the last words that Lincoln spoke to his Cabinet. They dispersed with these words of clemency and good-will in their ears, never again to meet under his wise and benignant chairmanship. He had told them that morning a strange story, which made some demand upon their faith, but the circumstances under which they were next to come together were beyond the scope of the wildest fancy. The day was one of unusual enjoyment to Mr. Lincoln. His son Robert had returned from the field with General Grant, and the President spent an hour with the young captain in delighted conversation over the campaign. He denied himself generally to the throng of visitors, admitting only a few friends. Apl. 14, 1865.

Schuyler Colfax, who was contemplating a visit overland to the Pacific, came to ask whether the President would probably call an extra session of Congress during the summer. Mr. Lincoln assured him that he had no such intention, and gave him a verbal message to the mining population of Colorado and the Western slope of the mountains concerning the part they were to take in the great conquests of peace which were coming. In the afternoon he went for a long drive with Mrs. Lincoln. His mood, as it had been all day, was singularly happy and tender. He talked much of the past and the future; after four years of trouble and tumult he looked

CHAP. XIV. forward to four years of comparative quiet and normal work; after that he expected to go back to Illinois and practice law again. He was never
Apl. 14, 1865. simpler or gentler than on this day of unprecedented triumph; his heart overflowed with sentiments of gratitude to Heaven, which took the shape usual to generous natures, of love and kindness to all men.

From the very beginning of his Presidency Mr. Lincoln had been constantly subject to the threats of his enemies and the warnings of his friends. The threats came in every form; his mail was infested with brutal and vulgar menace, mostly anonymous, the proper expression of vile and cowardly minds. The warnings were not less numerous; the vaporings of village bullies, the extravagances of excited secessionist politicians, even the drolling of practical jokers, were faithfully reported to him by zealous or nervous friends. Most of these communications received no notice. In cases where there seemed a ground for inquiry it was made, as carefully as possible, by the President's private secretary and by the War Department, but always without substantial result. Warnings that appeared to be most definite, when they came to be examined proved too vague and confused for further attention. The President was too intelligent not to know he was in some danger. Madmen frequently made their way to the very door of the Executive offices and sometimes into Mr. Lincoln's presence.[1] He had himself so sane

[1] All Presidents receive visits from persons more or less demented. Mr. Hayes, when about to retire one day from his working-room, asked his messenger if there was any one waiting to see

a mind, and a heart so kindly even to his enemies, that it was hard for him to believe in a political hatred so deadly as to lead to murder. He would sometimes laughingly say, "Our friends on the other side would make nothing by exchanging me for Hamlin," the Vice-President having the reputation of more radical views than his chief.

He knew indeed that incitements to murder him were not uncommon in the South. An advertisement had appeared in a paper of Selma, Alabama, in December, 1864, opening a subscription for funds to effect the assassination of Lincoln, Seward, and Johnson before the inauguration. There was more of this murderous spirit abroad than was suspected. A letter was found in the Confederate Archives from one Lieutenant Alston, who wrote to Jefferson Davis immediately after Lincoln's re-election, offering to "rid his country of some of her deadliest enemies by striking at the very heart's blood of those who seek to enchain her in slavery." This shameless proposal was referred, by Mr. Davis's direction, to the Secretary of War; and by Judge Campbell, Assistant Secretary of War, was sent to the Confederate Adjutant-General indorsed "for attention." We can readily imagine what reception an officer would have met with who should have laid before Mr. Lincoln a scheme to assassinate Jefferson Davis. It was the uprightness and the kindliness of his own heart that made him slow to believe that any such ignoble fury

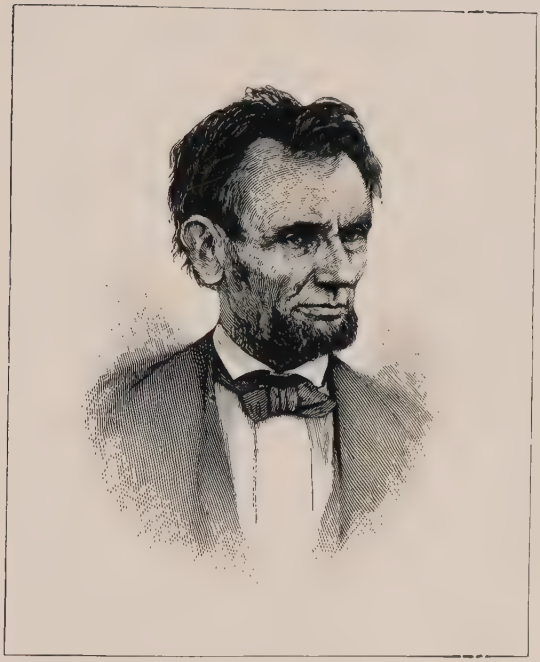
Pitman, Conspiracy Trial, p. 51. W. Alston to Jefferson Davis. On file in the office of the Judge Advocate-General at Washington. Ibid., p. 52.

him. "Only two, and one of them is crazy." "Send in the sane one," said the President. A grave-looking man was introduced, who announced himself as the emperor of the world. The President rang the bell, and told the messenger if that was his idea of sanity to send in the maniac.

CHAP. XIV. could find a place in the hearts of men in their right minds.

Although he freely discussed with the officials about him the possibilities of danger, he always considered them remote, as is the habit of men constitutionally brave, and positively refused to torment himself with precautions for his own safety. He would sum the matter up by saying that both friends and strangers must have daily access to him in all manner of ways and places; his life was therefore in reach of any one, sane or mad, who was ready to murder and be hanged for it; that he could not possibly guard against all danger unless he were to shut himself up in an iron box, in which condition he could scarcely perform the duties of a President; by the hand of a murderer he could die only once; to go continually in fear would be to die over and over. He therefore went in and out before the people, always unarmed, generally unattended. He would receive hundreds of visitors in a day, his breast bare to pistol or knife. He would walk at midnight, with a single secretary or alone, from the Executive Mansion to the War Department and back. He would ride through the lonely roads of an uninhabited suburb from the White House to the Soldiers' Home in the dusk of evening, and return to his work in the morning before the town was astir. He was greatly annoyed when it was decided that there must be a guard stationed at the Executive Mansion, and that a squad of cavalry must accompany him on his daily ride; but he was always reasonable and yielded to the best judgment of others.

Four years of threats and boastings, of alarms



ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

From a photograph taken March 6, 1865.

that were unfounded, and of plots that came to nothing thus passed away; but precisely at the time when the triumph of the nation over the long insurrection seemed assured, and a feeling of peace and security was diffused over the country, one of the conspiracies, not seemingly more important than the many abortive ones, ripened in the sudden heat of hatred and despair. A little band of malignant secessionists, consisting of John Wilkes Booth, an actor, of a family of famous players, Lewis Powell, alias Payne, a disbanded rebel soldier from Florida, George Atzerodt, formerly a coachmaker, but more recently a spy and blockade runner of the Potomac, David E. Herold, a young druggist's clerk, Samuel Arnold and Michael O'Laughlin, Maryland secessionists and Confederate soldiers, and John H. Surratt, had their ordinary rendezvous at the house of Mrs. Mary E. Surratt, the widowed mother of the last named, formerly a woman of some property in Maryland, but reduced by reverses to keeping a small boarding-house in Washington.

CHAP. XIV

Pitman, pp. 350, 222.

541 H St.

Booth was the leader of the little coterie. He was a young man of twenty-six, strikingly handsome, with a pale olive face, dark eyes, and that ease and grace of manner which came to him of right from his theatrical ancestors. He had played for several seasons with only indifferent success; his value as an actor lay rather in his romantic beauty of person than in any talent or industry he possessed. He was a fanatical secessionist; had assisted at the capture and execution of John Brown, and had imbibed at Richmond and other Southern cities where he had played, a furious spirit of partisanship against Lincoln and the Union party.

CHAP. XIV. After the reëlection of Mr. Lincoln, which rang the knell of the insurrection, Booth, like many of the secessionists North and South, was stung to the quick by disappointment. He visited Canada, consorted with the rebel emissaries there, and at last — whether or not at their instigation cannot certainly be said — conceived a scheme to capture the President and take him to Richmond. He spent a great part of the autumn and winter inducing a small number of loose fish of secession sympathies to join him in this fantastic enterprise. He seemed always well supplied with money, and talked largely of his speculations in oil as a source of income; but his agent afterwards testified that he never realized a dollar from that source; that his investments, which were inconsiderable, were a total loss. The winter passed away and nothing was accomplished. On the 4th of March, Booth was at the Capitol and created a disturbance by trying to force his way through the line of policemen who guarded the passage through which the President walked to the east front of the building. His intentions at this time are not known; he afterwards said he lost an excellent chance of killing the President that day.

Pitman, p. 45.

He was seized and held back by John W. Westfall, of the Capitol Police.

Pitman, p. 45.

There are indications in the evidence given on the trial of the conspirators that they suffered some great disappointment in their schemes in the latter part of March, and a letter from Arnold to Booth, dated March 27, showed that some of them had grown timid of the consequences of their contemplated enterprise and were ready to give it up. He advised Booth, before going further, "to go and see how it will be taken in R—d." But timid

1865.

Ibid., p. 236.

as they might be by nature, the whole group was so completely under the ascendency of Booth that they did not dare disobey him when in his presence; and after the surrender of Lee, in an access of malice and rage which was akin to madness, he called them together and assigned each his part in the new crime, the purpose of which had arisen suddenly in his mind out of the ruins of the abandoned abduction scheme. This plan was as brief and simple as it was horrible. Powell, alias Payne, the stalwart, brutal, simple-minded boy from Florida, was to murder Seward; Atzerodt, the comic villain of the drama, was assigned to remove Andrew Johnson; Booth reserved for himself the most difficult and most conspicuous rôle of the tragedy; it was Herold's duty to attend him as a page and aid in his escape. Minor parts were assigned to stage carpenters and other hangers-on, who probably did not understand what it all meant. Herold, Atzerodt, and Surratt had previously deposited at a tavern at Surrattsville, Maryland, owned by Mrs. Surratt, but kept by a man named Lloyd, a quantity of ropes, carbines, ammunition, and whisky, which were to be used in the abduction scheme. On the 11th of April Mrs. Surratt, being at the tavern, told Lloyd to have the shooting irons in readiness, and on Friday, the 14th, again visited the place and told him they would probably be called for that night. CHAP. XIV. 1865.

The preparations for the final blow were made with feverish haste; it was only about noon of the 14th that Booth learned the President was to go to Ford's Theater that night. It has always been a matter of surprise in Europe that he should have

CHAP. XIV. been at a place of amusement on Good Friday; but the day was not kept sacred in America, except by the members of certain churches. It was not, throughout the country, a day of religious observance. The President was fond of the theater; it was one of his few means of recreation. It was
APL. 14, 1865. natural enough that, on this day of profound national thanksgiving, he should take advantage of a few hours' relaxation to see a comedy. Besides, the town was thronged with soldiers and officers, all eager to see him; it was represented to him that appearing occasionally in public would gratify many people whom he could not otherwise meet. Mrs. Lincoln had asked General and Mrs. Grant to accompany her; they had accepted, and the announcement that they would be present was made as an advertisement in the evening papers; but they changed their minds and went North by an afternoon train. Mrs. Lincoln then invited in their stead Miss Harris and Major Henry R. Rathbone, the daughter and the stepson of Senator Ira Harris. The President's carriage called for these young people, and the four went together to the theater. The President had been detained by visitors, and the play had made some progress when he arrived. When he appeared in his box the band struck up "Hail to the Chief," the actors ceased playing, and the audience rose, cheering tumultuously; the President bowed in acknowledgment of this greeting and the play went on.

From the moment Booth ascertained the President's intention to attend the theater in the evening his every action was alert and energetic. He and his confederates, Herold, Surratt, and Atzerodt, were

seen on horseback in every part of the city. He had a hurried conference with Mrs. Surratt before she started for Lloyd's tavern. He intrusted to an actor named Matthews a carefully prepared statement of his reasons for committing the murder, which he charged him to give to the publisher of the "National Intelligencer," but which Matthews, in the terror and dismay of the night, burned without showing to any one. Booth was perfectly at home in Ford's Theater, where he was greatly liked by all the employees, without other reason than the sufficient one of his youth and good looks. Either by himself or with the aid of his friends he arranged his whole plan of attack and escape during the afternoon. He counted upon address and audacity to gain access to the small passage behind the President's box; once there, he guarded against interference by an arrangement of a wooden bar to be fastened by a simple mortice in the angle of the wall and the door by which he entered, so that the door could not be opened from without. He even provided for the contingency of not gaining entrance to the box by boring a hole in its door, through which he might either observe the occupants or take aim and shoot. He hired at a livery stable a small, fleet horse, which he showed with pride during the day to barkeepers and loafers among his friends.

CHAP. XI. Apl. 14, 1865.

John F. Coyle, MS. Statement.

The moon rose that night at ten o'clock. A few minutes before that hour he called one of the underlings of the theater to the back door and left him there holding his horse. He then went to a saloon near by, took a drink of brandy, and, entering the theater, passed rapidly through the crowd in

CHAP. XIV. rear of the dress circle and made his way to the passage leading to the President's box. He showed a
APL. 14, 1865. card to a servant in attendance and was allowed to pass in. He entered noiselessly, and, turning, fastened the door with the bar he had previously made ready, without disturbing any of the occupants of the box, between whom and himself there yet remained the slight partition and the door

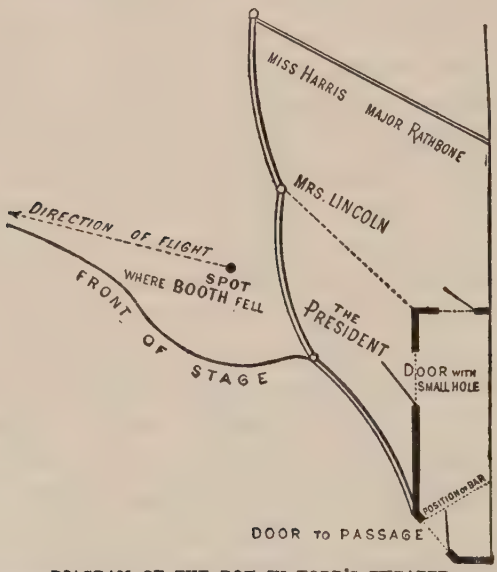


DIAGRAM OF THE BOX IN FORD'S THEATER.
(COPIED FROM THE DRAWING IN THE WAR DEPARTMENT.)

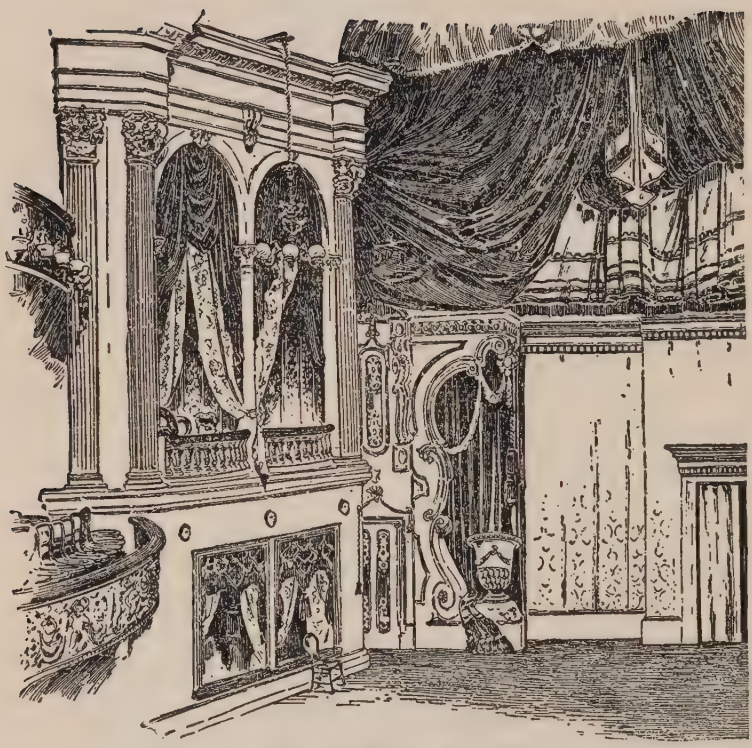
through which he had bored the hole. Their eyes were fixed upon the stage; the play was "Our American Cousin," the original version by Tom Taylor, before Sothern had made a new work of it by his elaboration of the part of *Dundreary*.

No one, not even the comedian on the stage, could ever remember the last words of the piece that were uttered that night — the last Abraham

Lincoln heard upon earth. The whole performance remains in the memory of those who heard it a vague phantasmagoria, the actors the thinnest of specters. The awful tragedy in the box makes everything else seem pale and unreal. Here were five human beings in a narrow space — the greatest man of his time, in the glory of the most stupendous success in our history, the idolized chief of a nation already mighty, with illimitable vistas of grandeur to come; his beloved wife, proud and happy; a pair of betrothed lovers, with all the promise of felicity that youth, social position, and wealth could give them; and this young actor, handsome as Endymion upon Latmos, the pet of his little world. The glitter of fame, happiness, and ease was upon the entire group, but in an instant everything was to be changed with the blinding swiftness of enchantment. Quick death was to come on the central figure of that company — the central figure, we believe, of the great and good men of the century. Over all the rest the blackest fates hovered menacingly — fates from which a mother might pray that kindly death would save her children in their infancy. One was to wander with the stain of murder on his soul, with the curses of a world upon his name, with a price set upon his head, in frightful physical pain, till he died a dog's death in a burning barn; the stricken wife was to pass the rest of her days in melancholy and madness; of those two young lovers, one was to slay the other, and then end his life a raving maniac.

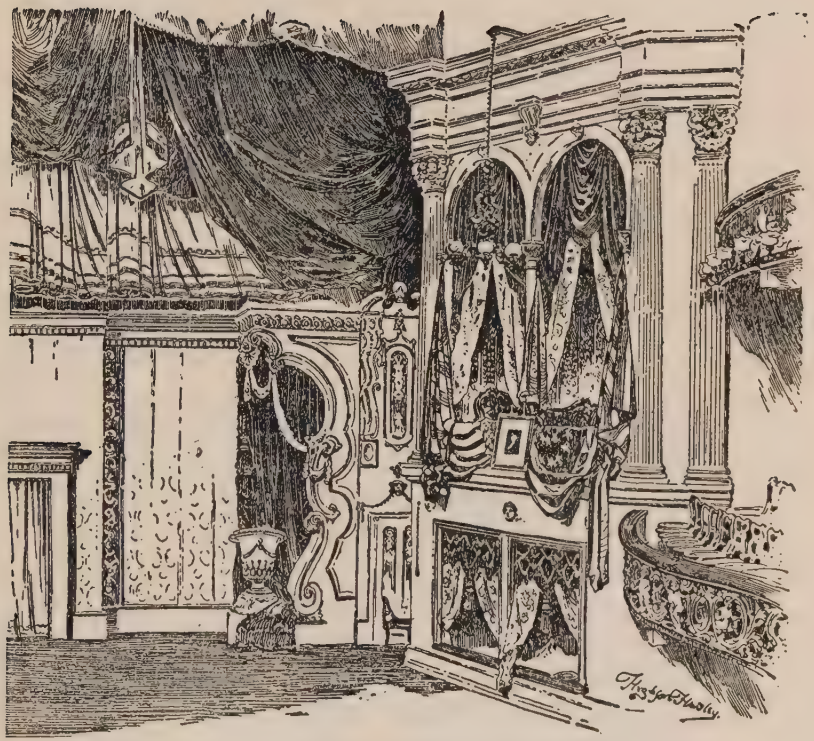
CHAP. XIV. Apl. 14, 1865.

The murderer seemed to himself to be taking part in a play. Partisan hate and the fumes of brandy



STAGE AND PROSCENIUM BOXES OF FORD'S THEATER AS THEY

This drawing was made from two photographs by Brady, lent by W. R. Speare of Washington. One of the photographs (of the President's box, on the opposite page), supposed to be the earlier of the two, differs from the other photograph (showing the stage and all the boxes) as regards the three silk flags, apparently regimental flags, fixed at the sides and middle column of the box. Joseph S.



APPEARED ON THE NIGHT OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S ASSASSINATION.

Sessford, at the time assistant treasurer of the theater, is authority for the statement that the second photograph (presented to Mr. Speare by L. Moxley, who had it from Mr. Sessford) was taken three or four days after the assassination, when none of the decorations, except the regimental flags, had been removed. The portrait between the flags is an engraving of Washington.

CHAP. XIV. Apl. 14, 1865.

had for weeks kept his brain in a morbid state. He felt as if he were playing Brutus off the boards; he posed, expecting applause. Holding a pistol in one hand and a knife in the other, he opened the box door, put the pistol to the President's head, and fired; dropping the weapon, he took the knife in his right hand, and when Major Rathbone sprang to seize him he struck savagely at him. Major Rathbone received the blow on his left arm, suffering a wide and deep wound. Booth, rushing forward, then placed his left hand on the railing of the box and vaulted lightly over to the stage. It was a high leap, but nothing to such a trained athlete. He was in the habit of introducing what actors call sensational leaps in his plays. In "Macbeth," where he met the weird sisters, he leaped from a rock twelve feet high. He would have got safely away but for his spur catching in the folds of the Union flag with which the front of the box was draped. He fell on the stage, the torn flag trailing on his spur, but instantly rose as if he had received no hurt, though in fact the fall had broken his leg; he turned to the audience, brandishing his dripping knife, and shouting the State motto of Virginia, "Sic Semper Tyrannis,"[1] and fled rapidly across the stage and out of sight. Major Rathbone had shouted, "Stop him!" The cry went

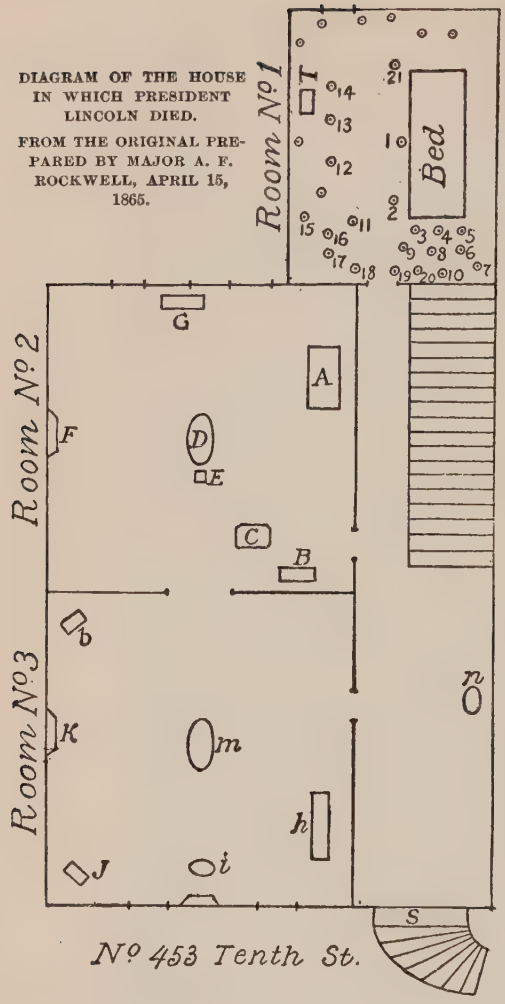
[1] Mr. Leopold de Gaillard, writing on the 29th of April, 1865, refers to these words of Booth, which he calls a "stupid phrase," and not American in character. "I remember," he adds, "but one assassination adorned with a Latin quotation, but it took place in Florence, and in the sixteenth century. Lorenzino treacherously killed his cousin, Alexander de Medici, who was in reality a tyrant, and left in writing near the body the line of Virgil on Brutus: *Vincet amor patriæ laudumque immensa cupido.* It was the thirst of fame which was the real incentive to these savage deeds." — "Gazette de France," April 30, 1865.

out, "He has shot the President." From the audience, at first stupid with surprise, and afterwards wild with excitement and horror, two or three men jumped upon the stage in pursuit of the flying assassin; but he ran through the familiar passages, leaped upon his horse, which was in waiting in the alley behind, rewarded with a kick and a curse the call-boy who had held him, and rode rapidly away in the light of the just risen moon.

The President scarcely moved; his head drooped forward slightly, his eyes closed. Colonel Rathbone, at first not regarding his own grievous hurt, rushed to the door of the box to summon aid. He found it barred, and on the outside some one was beating and clamoring for entrance. He opened the door; a young officer named Crawford entered; one or two army surgeons soon followed, who hastily examined the wound. It was at once seen to be mortal. It was afterwards ascertained that a large derringer bullet had entered the back of the head on the left side, and, passing through the brain, had lodged just behind the left eye. By direction of Rathbone and Crawford, the President was carried to a house across the street and laid upon a bed in a small room at the rear of the hall, on the ground floor. Mrs. Lincoln followed, half distracted, tenderly cared for by Miss Harris. Rathbone, exhausted by loss of blood, fainted, and was carried home. Messengers were sent for the members of the Cabinet, for the Surgeon-General, for Dr. Robert K. Stone, the President's family physician; a crowd of people rushed instinctively to the White House and, bursting through the doors,

DIAGRAM OF THE HOUSE IN WHICH PRESIDENT LINCOLN DIED.

FROM THE ORIGINAL PREPARED BY MAJOR A. F. ROCKWELL, APRIL 15, 1865.



ROOM NO. 1.—The following indicates the position of persons present, when the Surgeon-General announced the death of the President at 7 : 22 A. M., April 15, 1865 :

1. Surgeon-General Barnes (sitting on the side of the bed, holding the hand of the President).
2. Rev. Dr. Gurley.
3. Surgeon Crane (holding the President's head).
4. Robert Lincoln.
5. Senator Sumner.
6. Assistant Secretary M. B. Field.
7. Major John Hay, Private Secretary of the President.
8. Secretary Welles.
9. General Halleck.
10. Attorney-General Speed.
11. General Meigs (Quartermaster-General).
12. Secretary Usher.
13. Secretary Stanton.
14. Governor Dennison.
15. Major Thomas T. Eckert (Chief of Telegraph Corps at War Dep't).
16. Mrs. Kinney.
17. Miss Kinney.
18. Col. Thomas M. Vincent (War Dep't).
19. Col. L. H. Pelouze (War Dep't).
20. Major A. F. Rockwell (War Dep't).
21. Secretary Hugh McCulloch (occupied this position during the night, but was not present at the closing scene).

The few others noted were persons unknown to Colonel Rockwell. [Generals Augur, Farnsworth, and Todd, Drs. Stone, Leale, Taft, and Abbott, and Alexander Williamson (tutor at the White House) were among them.

ROOM NO. 2.—This room was used for the preliminary examination of witnesses. A stenographer was seated at the center table (*D*) from 12 to 8 in the morning. The Secretary (Stanton) wrote his dispatches to General Dix (with lead pencil) at the same table (*C*).

A, Bed. *B*, Washstand. *C*, Table. *D*, Table. *E*, Chair. *F*, Fireplace. *G*, Dressing Case.

ROOM NO. 3.—This room was occupied by Mrs. Lincoln, Robert Lincoln, and two or three friends.

Mrs. Lincoln occupied the sofa (*H*) through the night.

H, Sofa. *I*, Table. *J* and *L*, Étagères. *K*, Fireplace.

HALL.—Carpet covered with oilcloth, stained with drops of blood.

N, Hat Rack. *S*, Large blood spot on doorstep.

shouted the dreadful news to Robert Lincoln and Major Hay, who sat gossiping in an upper room, Mr. Nicolay being absent at Charleston, at the flag-raising over Sumter. They ran downstairs. Finding a carriage at the door, they entered it to go to Tenth street. As they were driving away, a friend came up and told them that Mr. Seward and most of the Cabinet had been murdered. The news was all so improbable that they could not help hoping it was all untrue. But when they got to Tenth street and found every thoroughfare blocked by the swiftly gathering thousands, agitated by tumultuous excitement, they were prepared for the worst. In a few minutes those who had been sent for, and many others, were gathered in the little chamber where the chief of the state lay in his agony. His son was met at the door by Dr. Stone, who with grave tenderness informed him that there was no hope. After a natural outburst of grief young Lincoln devoted himself the rest of the night to soothing and comforting his mother.

The President had been shot a few minutes past ten. The wound would have brought instant death to most men, but his vital tenacity was extraordinary. He was, of course, unconscious from the first moment; but he breathed with slow and regular respiration throughout the night. As the dawn came, and the lamplight grew pale in the fresher beams, his pulse began to fail; but his face even then was scarcely more haggard than those of the sorrowing group of statesmen and generals around him. His automatic moaning, which had continued through the night, ceased; a look of

CHAP. XIV. unspeakable peace came upon his worn features.
Apl. 15, 1865. At twenty-two minutes after seven he died. Stanton broke the silence by saying, "Now he belongs to the ages." Dr. Gurley kneeled by the bedside and prayed fervently. The widow came in from the adjoining room supported by her son and cast herself with loud outcry on the dead body.

CHAPTER XV

THE FATE OF THE ASSASSINS

BOOTH had done his work efficiently. His principal subordinate, the young Floridian called Payne, had acted with equal audacity and cruelty, but not with equally fatal result. He had made a shambles of the residence of the Secretary of State, but among all his mangled victims there was not one killed. At eight o'clock that night he received his final orders from Booth, who placed in his hands a knife and revolver, and a little package like a prescription, and taught him his lesson. Payne was a young man, hardly of age, of herculean strength, of very limited mental capacity, blindly devoted to Booth, who had selected him as the fitting instrument of his mad hatred. He obeyed the orders of his fascinating senior as exactly and remorselessly as a steel machine. At precisely the moment when Booth entered the theater, Payne came on horseback to the door of Mr. Seward's residence on Lafayette Square. Dismounting he pretended to be a messenger from the attending physician, with a package of medicine, and demanded immediate access to the sick-room of the Secretary. Mr. Seward had been thrown from his carriage a few days before and his right arm and jaw were fractured. The servant at the

Doster's Speech, Pitman, p. 314.

His true name was Lewis Thornton Powell.

In 1890 the residence of James G. Blaine, Secretary of State.

CHAP. XV. APL. 14, 1865.

door tried to prevent Payne from going up the stairs, but he persisted, and the noise the two men made in mounting brought his son Frederick W. Seward out into the hall.

The Secretary had been very restless and had with difficulty at last been composed to sleep. Fearing that this restorative slumber might be broken, Frederick Seward came out to check the intruders. He met Payne at the head of the stairs, and after hearing his story bade him go back, offering himself to take charge of the medicine. Payne seemed for an instant to give up his purpose in the face of this unexpected obstacle, but suddenly turned and rushed furiously upon Frederick Seward, putting a pistol to his head. It missed fire, and he then began beating him on the head with it, tearing his scalp and fracturing his skull. Still struggling, the two came to the Secretary's room and fell together through the door. Frederick Seward soon became unconscious and remained so for several weeks, being perhaps the last man in the civilized world who learned the strange story of the night. The Secretary lay on the farther side of the bed from the door; in the room was his daughter and a soldier-nurse, Sergeant G. F. Robinson. They both sprang up at the noise of the disturbance; Payne struck them right and left out of his way, wounding Robinson with his knife; then rushed to the bed and began striking at the throat of the crippled statesman, inflicting three terrible wounds in his cheek and neck; the Secretary rolled off between the bed and the wall.

Robinson had by this time recovered himself and seized the assassin from behind, trying to pull him

away from the bed. He fought with the quickness of a cat, stabbing Robinson twice severely over his shoulder, in spite of which the sergeant still held on to him bravely. Colonel Augustus Seward, roused by his sister's screams, came in his nightdress into the room, and seeing the two forms in this deadly grapple thought at first his father was delirious and was struggling with the nurse, but noting in a moment the size and strength of the man, he changed his mind and thought that the sergeant had gone mad and was murdering the Secretary. Nothing but madness was at first thought of anywhere to account for the night's work. He seized Payne, and after a struggle forced him out of the door — the assassin stabbing him repeatedly about the head and face. Payne broke away at last and ran rapidly downstairs, seriously wounding an attendant named Hansell on the way. He reached the door unhurt, leaped upon his horse, and rode leisurely away out Vermont Avenue to the eastern suburb. When surgical aid arrived, the quiet house, ordinarily so decorous and well ordered, the scene of an affectionate home life and an unobtrusive hospitality, looked like a field hospital; five of its inmates were bleeding from ghastly wounds, and two of them — among the highest officials of the nation — it was thought might never see the light of another day; though all providentially recovered.

CHAP. XV. Apl. 14, 1865.

The assassin left behind him in his flight his bloodstained knife, his revolver, — or rather the fragments of it, for he had beaten it to pieces over the head of Frederick Seward, — and his hat. This last apparently trivial loss cost him and one of his

CHAP. XV. Apl. 14, 1865.

fellow-conspirators their lives; for as soon as he had left the immediate scene of his crime, his perceptions being quickened by a murderer's avenging fears, it occurred to him that the lack of a hat would expose him to suspicion wherever he was seen; so, instead of making good his escape, he abandoned his horse and hid himself for two days in the woods east of Washington. Driven by hunger he at last resolved to return to the city, to the house on H street which had been the headquarters of the conspiracy. He made himself a cap from the sleeve of his woolen shirt, threw over his shoulder a pickax he had found in a trench, and coming into town under cover of the darkness knocked about midnight at Mrs. Surratt's door. As his fate would have it, the house was full of officers who had that moment arrested all the inmates and were about to take them to the office of the provost-marshal. Payne thus fell into the hands of justice, and the utterance of half a dozen words by him and the unhappy woman whose shelter he had sought was the death warrant of both. Being asked by Major Smith to give an account of himself, he said he had been hired by Mrs. Surratt to dig a drain for her. She was called out and asked if she knew him. Not being aware of what he had said, she raised her right hand, with uncalled-for solemnity, and said, "Before God, I do not know him, never saw him, and never hired him." These words, the evidence of a guilty secret shared between them, started a train of evidence which led them both to the scaffold.

Booth was recognized by dozens of people as he stood before the footlights and brandished his drip-

ping dagger in a Brutus attitude. His swift horse quickly carried him beyond the reach of any haphazard pursuit. He gained the navy-yard bridge in a few minutes, was hailed by a sentry, but persuaded the sergeant of the guard that he was returning to his home in Charles County, and that he had waited in Washington till the moon should rise. He was allowed to pass, and shortly afterwards Herold came to the bridge and passed over with similar explanations. A moment later the owner of the horse which Herold rode came up in pursuit of his animal. He, the only honest man of the three, was turned back by the guard—the sergeant felt he must draw the line somewhere. The assassin and his wretched acolyte came at midnight to Mrs. Surratt's tavern. Booth, whose broken leg was by this time giving him excruciating torture, remained outside on his horse, and Herold went in, shouting to the inn-keeper to give him "those things." Lloyd, knowing what was meant, without a word brought the whisky, carbines, and field-glass which the Surratts had deposited there. Booth refused a gun, being unable in his crippled condition to carry it. Herold told Lloyd they had killed the President, and they rode away, leaving Lloyd, who was a sodden drunkard and contrabandist, unnerved by the news and by his muddy perception of his own complicity in the crime. He held his tongue for a day or two; but at last, overcome by fear, told all that he knew to the authorities. Booth and Herold pushed on through the moonlight to the house of an acquaintance of Booth, a rebel sympathizer, a surgeon named Samuel Mudd. The pain of his broken

CHAP. XV. bone had become intolerable and day was ap-
Apl. 15, 1865. proaching; aid and shelter had become pressingly necessary. Mudd received them kindly, set Booth's leg, and gave him a room where he rested until the middle of the afternoon; Mudd had a crutch made for him, and in the evening sent them on their desolate way to the South.

If Booth had been in health there is no reason why he should not have remained at large a good while; he might even have made his escape to some foreign country, though, sooner or later, a crime so prodigious will generally find its perpetrator out. But it is easy to hide among a sympathizing people. Many a Union soldier, escaping from prison, walked hundreds of miles through the enemy's country, relying implicitly upon the friendship of the negroes. Booth, from the hour he crossed the navy-yard bridge, though he met with a considerable number of men, was given shelter and assistance by every one whose sympathies were with the South. After parting with Dr. Mudd, he and Herold went to the residence of Samuel Cox,[1] near Port Tobacco, and were by him given into the charge of Thomas Jones, a contraband trader between Maryland and Richmond, a man so devoted to the interests of the Confederacy that treason and murder seemed every-day incidents to be accepted as natural and necessary. He kept Booth and Herold in hiding, at the peril of his own life,

[1] What Booth and Herold were about during the week between
1865. the 15th and the 22d of April was not brought out upon the trial of the conspirators, but George Alfred Townsend, while making the extensive and careful studies for his historical novel, "Katy of Catoctin," reconstructed the entire itinerary of the assassin, and published an admirably clear account of it in "The Century Magazine" for April, 1884.

for a week, feeding and caring for them in the woods near his house, watching for an opportunity to ferry them across the Potomac. He did this while every woodpath was haunted by Government detectives, while his own neighborhood was under strong suspicion, knowing that death would promptly follow his detection, and that a reward was offered for the capture of his helpless charge which would make a rich man of any one who gave him up. So close was the search that Herold killed the horses on which they had ridden out of Washington for fear a neigh might betray their hiding-place. CHAP. XV. April, 1865.

With such devoted aid Booth might have wandered a long way; but there is no final escape but suicide for an assassin with a broken leg. At each painful move the chances of discovery increased. Jones was indeed able, after repeated failures, to row his fated guests across the Potomac. Arriving on the Virginia side, they lived the lives of hunted animals for two or three days longer, finding to their horror that they were received by the strongest Confederates with more of annoyance than enthusiasm — though none, indeed, offered to betray them. At one house, while food was given him, hospitality was not offered. Booth wrote the proprietor a note, pathetic in its attempted dignity, inclosing five dollars — "though hard to spare" — for his entertainment. "Trial of J. H. Surratt," p. 402.

He had by this time seen the comments of the newspapers on his work, and bitterer than death or wounds was the blow to his vanity. He confided his feelings of wrong to his diary: "I struck boldly, and not as the papers say; I walked with a Ibid., p. 310.

CHAP. XV. firm step through thousands of his friends; was stopped, but pushed on. A colonel was at his side. I shouted *Sic Semper* before I fired. In jumping broke my leg. I passed all his pickets. Rode sixty miles that night, with the bone of my leg tearing
April, 1865. the flesh at every jump." On Friday, the 21st, he writes: "After being hunted like a dog through swamps, woods, and last night chased by gunboats till I was forced to return, wet, cold, and starving, with every man's hand against me, I am here in despair. And why? For doing what Brutus was honored for — what made Tell a hero." He goes on comparing himself favorably with these stage heroes, and adds: "I struck for my country and that alone — a country that groaned beneath his tyranny and prayed for this end; and yet now behold the cold hand they extend to me." He was especially grieved that the grandiloquent letter he had intrusted to his fellow-actor Matthews — and which he in his terror had destroyed — had not been published.[1] He thought the Government had wickedly suppressed it; he was tortured with doubts whether God would forgive him, whether it would not be better to go back to Washington and "clear his name." "I am abandoned, with the curse of Cain upon me, when, if the world knew my heart, that one blow would have made me great." With blessings on his mother, upon his wretched

[1] He had written another letter in November, 1864, avowing his intention to abduct the President, and to enlist in the Southern army, signing it "A Confederate doing duty upon his own responsibility." He left this letter, sealed, in the hands of his brother-in-law, J. S. Clarke, the comedian. It was given by Mr. Clarke, after the assassination, to the United States authorities in Philadelphia and published in the "Press." It may be found in Raymond's "Life of Lincoln," pp. 793–796.

companion in crime and flight, upon the world which he thought was not worthy of him, he closed these strange outpourings, saying, "I do not wish to shed a drop of blood, but I must fight the course."

The course was soon ended. At Port Conway on the Rappahannock, Booth and Herold met three young men in Confederate uniforms. They were disbanded soldiers; but Herold, imagining that they were recruiting for the Southern army, told them his story with perfect frankness and even pride, saying, "We are the assassinators of the President," and asked their company into the Confederate lines. He was disappointed at learning they were not going South, but his confidence was not misplaced. The soldiers took the fugitives to Port Royal, and tried to get shelter for them, representing Booth as a wounded Confederate soldier. After one or two failures they found refuge on the farm of a man named Garrett on the road to Bowling Green.

On the night of the 25th of April a party under Lieutenant E. P. Doherty arrested, in his bed at Bowling Green, William Jett, one of the Confederate soldiers mentioned above, and forced him to guide them to Garrett's farm. Booth and Herold were sleeping in the barn. When called upon to surrender, Booth refused, and threatened to shoot young Garrett, who had gone in to get his arms. A parley took place, lasting some minutes. Booth offered to fight the party at a hundred yards, and when this was refused cried out in a theatrical tone, "Well, my brave boys, prepare a stretcher for me." Doherty then told him he would fire the barn; upon

CHAP. XV. this Herold came out and surrendered. The barn was fired, and while it was burning, Booth, who was clearly visible by the flames through the cracks in the building, was shot by Boston Corbett, a sergeant of cavalry, a soldier of a gloomy and fanatical disposition, which afterwards developed into insanity.[1] Booth was hit in the back of the neck, not far from the place where he had shot the President. He lingered about three hours in great pain, conscious but nearly inarticulate, and died at seven in the morning.

The surviving conspirators, with the exception of John H. Surratt, were tried by a military commission[2] sitting in Washington in the months of 1865. May and June. The charges against them specified that they were "incited and encouraged" to treason and murder by Jefferson Davis and the Confederate emissaries in Canada. This was not proved on the trial: the evidence bearing on the case showed frequent communication between Canada and Richmond and the Booth coterie in Washington, and some transactions in drafts at the Montreal Bank, where Jacob Thompson and Booth both kept their accounts. It was shown by the sworn testimony of a reputable witness that Jefferson Davis at Greensboro', on hearing of the assassination, expressed his gratification at the news; but this, so far from proving any direct complicity in

Lewis F. Bates, Testimony. Pitman, p. 46.

[1] In 1890 he was still living in an insane asylum in Kansas.

[2] This commission was composed of officers not only of high rank and distinction, but of unusual weight of character. They were Generals David Hunter, Lew Wallace, August V. Kautz, Albion P. Howe, Robert S. Foster, James A. Ekin, Thomas M. Harris, Colonels C. H. Tompkins and D. R. Clendenin. The Judge Advocate and Recorder was Joseph Holt, assisted by the Hon. John A. Bingham and Colonel H. L. Burnett.

the crime, would rather prove the opposite, as a conscious murderer usually conceals his malice.[1] Against all the rest the facts we have briefly stated were abundantly proved, though in the case of Mrs. Surratt the repugnance which all men feel at the execution of a woman induced the commission to unite in a recommendation to mercy, which President Johnson, then in the first flush of his zeal against traitors, disregarded.[2] Habeas corpus proceedings were then resorted to, and failed in virtue of the President's orders to the military in charge of the prisoners. The sentences were accordingly executed: Mrs. Surratt, Payne, Herold, and Atzerodt were hanged on the 7th of July; Mudd, Arnold, and O'Laughlin were imprisoned for life at the Tortugas, though the term was afterwards shortened; and Spangler, the scene shifter at the theater, was sentenced to six years in jail. John H. Surratt escaped to Canada, where he lay in hiding some months in a monastery, and in the autumn sailed for England under an assumed name. He wandered over Europe, enlisted in the Papal Zouaves, deserted and fled to Egypt, where he was detected and brought back to Washington in 1867. His trial lasted two months and ended in a disagreement of the jury.

CHAP. XV

1865.

[1] Mr. Davis, in his "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government," contradicts this evidence of Lewis F. Bates. He admits, however, that the dispatch, being read in his presence to the troops with him, elicited cheers, "as was natural at news of the fall of one they considered their most powerful foe"; and he adds, "For an enemy so relentless, in the war for our subjugation, we could not be expected to mourn." When captured by Wilson he affected to think he cleared himself of all suspicion in this regard by saying that Johnson was more objectionable to him than Lincoln — not noticing that the conspiracy contemplated the murder of both of them.

Vol. II., p. 683.

[2] See argument of Edwards Pierrepont, p. 77.

CHAPTER XVI

THE MOURNING PAGEANT

CHAP. XVI. RECOUNTING the fate of these wretched malefactors has led us far afield. We will now

1865. return to the morning of the 15th of April and sketch, in brief and wholly inadequate words, the honors which the nation paid to its dead. The appalling news spread quickly over the country; millions of citizens learned at their breakfast tables that the President had been shot and was dying; and two hours after his death, when a squad of soldiers were escorting his mortal remains to the Executive Mansion, the dreadful fact was known at all the great centers of population. This was the first time the telegraph had been called upon to spread over the world tidings of such deep and mournful significance; it was therefore the first time the entire people of the United States had been called to deplore the passing away of an idolized leader even before his body was cold in death. The news fell with peculiar severity upon the hearts which were glowing with the joy of a great victory. For the last four days, in every city and hamlet of the land, the people were breaking forth into unusual and fantastic expressions of gaiety and content; bonfires flamed through the nights;

the days were uproarious with the firing of guns; CHAP. XVI.
the streets were hung with flags and wreaths, and whatever decorations could be on the instant improvised by a people not especially gifted with the scenic sense; and committees were everywhere forming to arrange for elaborate and official functions of joy.

Upon this mirth and expansion the awful in- April, 1865.
telligence from Washington fell with the crushing and stunning effect of an unspeakable calamity. In the sudden rigor of this unexpected misfortune the country lost sight of the vast national success of the past week; and it thus came to pass that there was never any organized expression of the general exultation or rejoicing in the North over the downfall of the rebellion. It was unquestionably best that it should be so; and Lincoln himself would not have had it otherwise. He hated the arrogance of triumph; and even in his cruel death he would have been glad to know that his passage to eternity would prevent too loud an exultation over the vanquished. As it was, the South could take no umbrage at a grief so genuine and so legitimate; the people of that section even shared, to a certain degree, in the lamentations over the bier of one whom in their inmost hearts they knew to have wished them well.

There was one exception to the general grief too remarkable to be passed over in silence. Among the extreme radicals in Congress Mr. Lincoln's determined clemency and liberality towards the Southern people had made an impression so unfavorable that, though they were naturally shocked at his murder, they did not among themselves con-

CHAP. XVI. ceal their gratification that he was no longer in their way. In a political caucus, held a few hours after the President's death, they resolved on an entire change of the Cabinet, and a "line of policy less conciliatory than that of Mr. Lincoln; . . . the feeling was nearly universal"— we are using the language of one of their most prominent representatives —"that the accession of Johnson to the Presidency would prove a godsend to the country." The next day the Committee on the Conduct of the War called on the new President, and Senator Wade bluntly expressed to him the feeling of his associates: "Johnson, we have faith in you. By the gods, there will be no trouble now in running the Government." Before many months passed away they had opportunity to learn that violence of speech was no guarantee of political consistency.

George W. Julian, "Political Recollections," p. 255.

Ibid., p. 257.

In Washington, with this singular exception, the manifestation of the public grief was immediate and demonstrative. The insignia of rejoicing at once disappeared, and within an hour after the body of the President was taken to the White House the town was shrouded in black. Not only the public buildings, the stores and shops, and the better class of residences were draped in funeral decorations, but a still more touching proof of the affection with which the dead man was regarded was seen in the poorest class of houses, where the laboring men of both colors found means in their penury to afford some scanty show of mourning. The interest and the veneration of the people still centered in the White House, where, under a tall catafalque in the east room, the late chief of the state lay in the majesty of death, and not at the

modest tavern on Pennsylvania Avenue, where the new President had his lodging. At eleven o'clock Chief-Justice Chase administered the oath of office to Andrew Johnson in the presence of a few witnesses. He immediately summoned the Cabinet for a brief meeting. William Hunter was appointed Acting Secretary of State during the interim of the disability of Mr. Seward and his son, and directed to communicate to the country and the world the change in the head of the Government brought about by the last night's crime. It was determined that the funeral ceremonies in Washington should be celebrated on Wednesday, the 19th of April, and all the churches throughout the country were invited to join at the same time "in solemnizing the occasion" by appropriate observances. All of the pomp and circumstance which the Government could command was employed to give a fitting escort from the White House to the Capitol, where the body of the President was to lie in state. A splendidly appointed force of cavalry, artillery, and infantry formed the greater part of the procession, which was completed by delegations from Illinois and Kentucky as mourners, the new President, the Cabinet, the ministers of foreign powers, and all the high officers of the nation, legislative, judicial, and executive. The pall-bearers comprised the leading members of both Houses of Congress and the officers of the highest rank in the army and navy.

The ceremonies in the east room were brief and simple. The Rev. Dr. Hall of the Church of the Epiphany read the burial service. Bishop Simpson of the Methodist Church, distinguished equally

CHAP. XVI. for his eloquence and his patriotism, offered a prayer, and the Rev. Dr. P. D. Gurley, at whose church the President and his family habitually attended worship, delivered a short address, commemorating, in language notably free from courtly flattery, the qualities of courage, purity, and sublime faith which had made the dead man great and

THE FUNERAL CAR.

useful. The coffin was carried to the funeral car, and the vast procession moved to the Capitol amid the tolling of all the bells in Washington, Georgetown, and Alexandria, and the booming of minute-guns at Lafayette Square, at the City Hall, and on Capitol hill. To associate the pomp of the day with the greatest work of Lincoln's life, a detachment of colored troops marched at the head of the line. In the rotunda, under the soaring dome of the Capitol, the coffin rested during the April, 1865. day and night of the 19th and until the evening of the next day. The people passed by in thousands to gaze on the face of the liberator — which had taken on in death an expression of profound happiness and repose, like that so often seen on the features of soldiers shot dead in battle.

It had been decided from the first that Lincoln was to be buried at Springfield. Whenever a President dies, whose personality, more than his office, has endeared him to the people, it is proposed that his body shall rest at Washington; but the better instinct of the country, no less than the natural feelings of the family, insist that his dust shall lie among his own neighbors and kin. It is fitting that Washington shall sleep at Mount Vernon, the Adamses at Quincy, that even Harrison and Taylor and Garfield, though they died in office, should be conveyed to the bosom of the States which had cherished them and sent them to the service of the nation. So Illinois claimed her greatest citizen for final sepulture amid the scenes which witnessed the growth and development of his unique character. The town of Springfield set apart a lovely spot in its northern suburb for his grave and appropriated $20,000 — a large sum considering the size and wealth of the town — to defray the expenses of his funeral. As soon as it was announced that he was to be buried in Illinois every town and city on the route begged that the train might halt within its limits and give its people the opportunity of testifying their grief and their reverence. It was finally arranged that the funeral cortége should follow substantially the same route over which Lincoln had come in 1861 to take possession of the office to which he had given a new dignity and value for all time.

Governor John Brough of Ohio and John W. Garrett of Baltimore were placed in general charge of the solemn journey. A guard of honor consisting of a dozen officers of high rank in the army and

CHAP. XVI. navy[1] was detailed by their respective departments, which received the remains of the President at the station in Washington at eight o'clock on
1865. the morning of Friday, the 21st of April, and the train, decked in somber trappings, moved out towards Baltimore. In this city, through which, four years before, it was a question whether the President-elect could pass with safety to his life, the train made a halt; the coffin was taken with sacred care to the great dome of the Exchange, and there, surrounded by evergreens and lilies, it lay for several hours, the people passing by in mournful throngs. Night was closing in, with rain and wind, when the train reached Harrisburg, and the coffin was carried through the muddy streets to the State Capitol, where the next morning the same scenes of grief and affection were seen. We need not enumerate the many stopping places of this dolorous pageant. The same demonstration was repeated, gaining continually in intensity of feeling and solemn splendor of display, in every city through which the procession passed. At Philadelphia a vast concourse accompanied the dead President to Independence Hall; he had shown himself worthy of the lofty fate he courted when, on that hallowed spot, on the birthday of Washington, 1861, he had said he would rather be assassinated than give up the principles embodied in the Declaration of Independence. Here, as at many other places, the most touching manifestations of loving remembrance came from the poor, who brought flowers twined by themselves to lay upon

[1] General E. D. Townsend represented the Secretary of War, Rear-Admiral C. H. Davis the Secretary of the Navy.

the coffin. The reception at New York was worthy alike of the great city and of the memory of the man they honored. The body lay in state in the City Hall and a half million of people passed in deep silence before it. Here General Scott came, pale and feeble, but resolute, to pay his tribute of respect to his departed friend and commander. CHAP. XVI.

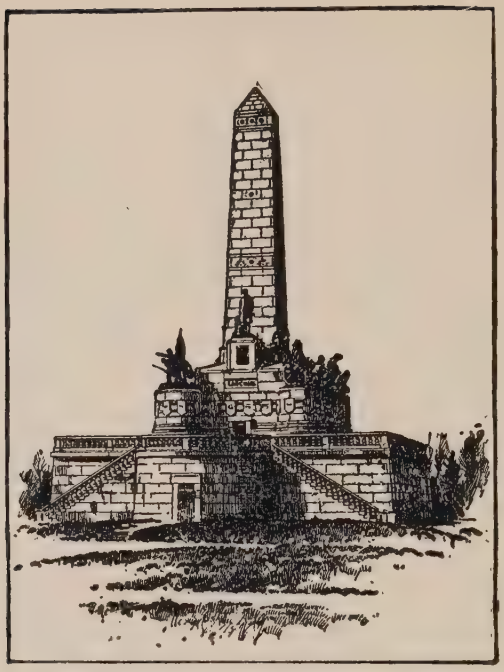
The train went up the Hudson River by night, and at every town and village on the way vast crowds were revealed in waiting by the fitful glare of torches; dirges and hymns were sung as the train moved by. Midnight had passed when the coffin was borne to the Capitol at Albany, yet the multitude rushed in as if it were day, and for twelve hours the long line of people from northern New York and the neighboring States poured through the room.

Over the broad spaces of New York the cortége made its way, through one continuous crowd of mourners. At Syracuse thirty thousand people came out in a storm at midnight to greet the passing train with fires and bells and cannons; at Rochester the same solemn observances made the night memorable; at Buffalo—it was now the morning of the 27th—the body lay in state at St. James's Hall, visited by a multitude from the western counties. As the train passed into Ohio the crowds increased in density, and the public grief seemed intensified at every step westward; the people of the great central basin seemed to be claiming their own. The day spent at Cleveland was unexampled in the depth of emotion it brought to life, the warm devotion to the memory of the great man gone which was exhibited; some of the April, 1865.

CHAP. XVI. guard of honor have said that it was at that point they began to appreciate the place which Lincoln was to hold in history. The authorities, seeing
April, 1865. that no building could accommodate the crowd which was sure to come from all over the State, wisely erected in the public square an imposing mortuary tabernacle for the lying in state, brilliant with evergreens and flowers by day, and innumerable gas jets by night, and surmounted by the inscription, *Extinctus amabitur idem.* Impressive religious ceremonies were conducted in the square by Bishop McIlvaine, and an immense procession moved to the station at night between two lines of torchlights. Columbus and Indianapolis, the State capitals of Ohio and Indiana, were next visited. The whole State, in each case, seemed gathered to meet their dead hero; an intense personal regard was everywhere evident; it was the man, not the ruler, they appeared to be celebrating; the banners and scrolls bore principally his own words: "With malice toward none, with charity for all"; "The purposes of the Lord are perfect and must prevail"; "Here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain"; and other brief passages from his writings. On arriving in Chicago, on the 1st of May, amid a scene of magnificent mourning, the body was borne to the court-house, where it lay for two days under a canopy of somber richness, inscribed with that noble Hebrew lament, "The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places." From all the States of the Northwest an innumerable throng poured for these two days into Chicago, and flowed, a mighty stream of humanity, past the coffin of the dead President, in the midst of

evidences of deep and universal grief which was all the more genuine for being quiet and reserved. CHAP. XVI

The last stage of this extraordinary progress was the journey to Springfield, which began on the night of the 2d of May and ended at nine o'clock the next morning—the schedule made in Washington twelve days before having been accurately carried out. On all the railroads centering in Springfield the trains for several days had been crowded to their utmost capacity with people who desired to see the last of Abraham Lincoln upon earth. Nothing had been done or thought of for two weeks in Springfield but the preparations for this day; they were made with a thoroughness which surprised the visitors from the East. The body lay in state in the Capitol, which was richly draped from roof to basement in black velvet and silver fringe; within it was a bower of bloom and fragrance. For twenty-four hours an unbroken stream of people passed through, bidding their friend and neighbor welcome home and farewell, and at ten o'clock on the 4th of May the coffin lid was closed at last and a vast procession moved out to Oak Ridge, where the dead President was committed to the soil of the State which had so loved and honored him. The ceremonies at the grave were simple and touching. Bishop Simpson delivered a pathetic oration; prayers were offered and hymns were sung; but the weightiest and most eloquent words uttered anywhere that day were those of the Second Inaugural, which the committee had wisely ordained to be read over his grave, as the friends of Raphael chose the incom- 1865.



THE LINCOLN MONUMENT AT SPRINGFIELD.

parable canvas of the Transfiguration as the chief ornament of his funeral.

An association was immediately formed to build a monument over the grave of Lincoln. The work was in the hands of his best and oldest friends in Illinois, and was pushed with vigor. Few large subscriptions were received, with the exception of $50,000 voted by the State of Illinois and $10,000 by New York; but innumerable small contributions afforded all that was needed. The soldiers and sailors of the nation gave $28,000, of which the disproportionately large amount of $8,000 was the gift of the negro troops, whose manhood Lincoln had recognized by putting arms in their

hands.[1] In all $180,000 was raised, and the monument, built after a design by Larkin G. Mead, was dedicated on the 15th of October, 1874. The day was fine, the concourse of people was enormous; there were music and eloquence and a brilliant decorative display. The orator of the day was General Richard J. Oglesby, who praised his friend with warm but sober eulogy; General Sherman added his honest and hearty tribute; and General Grant, twice elected President, uttered these carefully chosen words, which had all the weight that belongs to the rare discourses of that candid and reticent soldier:

> From March, 1864, to the day when the hand of the assassin opened a grave for Mr. Lincoln, then President of the United States, my personal relations with him were as close and intimate as the nature of our respective duties would permit. To know him personally was to love and respect him for his great qualities of heart and head, and for his patience and patriotism. With all his disappointments from failures on the part of those to whom he had intrusted commands, and treachery on the part of those who had gained his confidence but to betray it, I never heard him utter a complaint, nor cast a censure, for bad conduct or bad faith. It was his nature to find excuses for his adversaries. In his death the nation lost its greatest hero; in his death the South lost its most just friend.

[1] Besides contributing thus generously to the Springfield monument, the freed people gave another touching instance of their gratitude by erecting in a public square on Capitol Hill in Washington a noble group in bronze, including Lincoln, and entitled "Emancipation." The subscription for this purpose was started by a negro washerwoman. The statue is by Thomas Ball.

CHAPTER XVII

THE END OF REBELLION

Ch. XVII.

IN the early years of the war, after every considerable success of the national arms, the newspapers were in the habit of announcing that "the back of the rebellion was broken." But at last the time came when the phrase was true; after

April, 1865.

Appomattox, the rebellion fell to pieces all at once, Lee surrendered less than one-sixth of the Confederates in arms on the 9th of April; the armies that still remained to them, though inconsiderable when compared with the mighty host under the national colors, were yet infinitely larger than any Washington had commanded, and were capable of strenuous resistance and of incalculable mischief. Leading minds on both sides thought the war might be indefinitely prolonged. We have seen that Jefferson Davis, after Richmond fell, issued his swelling manifesto, saying the Confederates had "now entered upon a new phase of the struggle," and that he would "never consent to abandon to the enemy one foot of the soil of any of the States of the Confederacy." General Sherman, so late as the 25th of April, said, "I now apprehend that the rebel armies will disperse; and instead of dealing with six or seven States, we will have to deal with numberless bands

Sherman to Grant, Report Committee on Conduct of the War, 1864–65. Part III., p. 18.

of desperadoes." Neither side comprehended fully the intense weariness of war that had taken possession of the South; and peace came more swiftly and completely than any one had ever dared to hope. CH. XVII.

The march of Sherman from Atlanta to the sea and his northward progress through the Carolinas had predisposed the great interior region to make an end of strife, a tendency which was greatly promoted by Wilson's energetic and masterly raid. The rough usage received by Taylor and by Forrest at his hands, and the blow their dignity suffered in the chase of their fugitive President, made their surrender more practicable. An officer of Taylor's staff came to Canby's headquarters on the 19th of April to make arrangements for the surrender of all the Confederate forces east of the Mississippi not already paroled by Sherman and by Wilson — embracing some 42,000 men. On the 4th of May the terms were agreed upon and signed at the village of Citronelle in Alabama. General Taylor gives a picturesque incident of his meeting with General Canby. The Union officers invited the Confederates to a luncheon, and while the latter were enjoying a menu to which they had long been unaccustomed, the military band in attendance began playing "Hail, Columbia." Canby — with a courtesy, Taylor says, equal to anything recorded by Froissart — excused himself, and walked to the door; the music ceased for a moment, and then the air of "Dixie" was heard. The Confederates, not to be left in arrears of good-breeding, then demanded the national air, and the flag of the reunited country was toasted by both sides. 1865.

CH. XVII. The terms agreed upon were those accorded by Grant to Lee, with slight changes of detail, the United States Government furnishing transportation and subsistence on the way home to the men lately engaged in the effort to destroy it. The Confederates willingly testify to the cordial generosity with which they were treated. "Public property," says General Taylor, "was turned over and receipted for, and this as orderly and quickly as in time of peace between officers of the same service." At the same time and place the Confederate commodore Ebenezer Farrand surrendered to Rear-Admiral Henry K. Thatcher all the naval forces of the Confederacy in the neighborhood of Mobile — a dozen vessels and some hundreds of officers.

General E. Kirby Smith commanded all the insurgent forces west of the Mississippi. On him the desperate hopes of Mr. Davis and his flying Cabinet were fixed, after the successive surrenders of Lee and Johnston had left them no prospect in the East. They imagined they could move westward, gathering up stragglers as they fled, and, crossing the river, could join Smith's forces, and "form an army, which in that portion of the country, abounding in supplies and deficient in rivers and railroads, could have continued the war. . ." "To this hope," adds Mr. Davis, "I persistently clung."

1865 Smith, on the 21st of April, called upon his soldiers to continue the fight. "You possess the means of long resisting invasion. You have hopes of succor from abroad. . . The great resources of this department, its vast extent, the numbers, the discipline, and the efficiency of the army, will

secure to our country terms that a proud people can with honor accept, and may, under the providence of God, be the means of checking the triumph of our enemy and securing the final success of our cause." CH. XVII.

The attitude of Smith seemed so threatening that Sheridan was sent from Washington to bring him to reason. But he did not long hold his position of solitary defiance. One more needless skirmish took place near Brazos, and then Smith followed the example of Taylor, and surrendered his entire force, some eighteen thousand, to General Canby, on the 26th of May. The same generous terms were accorded him that had been given to Taylor — the Government fed his troops and carried them to their homes. 1865.

Meanwhile, General Wilson had been paroling many thousands of prisoners, who wandered in straggling parties within the limits of his command. One hundred and seventy-five thousand men in all were surrendered by the different Confederate commanders, and there were, in addition to these, about 99,000 prisoners in national custody during the year; one-third of these were exchanged and two-thirds released. This was done as rapidly as possible, by successive orders of the War Department, beginning on the 9th of May and continuing through the summer. 1865.

The first object of the Government was to stop the waste of war. Recruiting ceased immediately after Lee's surrender; the purchase of arms and supplies was curtailed, and measures were taken to reduce as promptly as possible the vast military establishment. It had grown during the last few

CH. XVII. months to portentous dimensions. The impression that a great and final victory was near at hand, the stimulus of the national hope, the prospect of a brief and prosperous campaign, had brought the army up to the magnificent complement of a million men.[1] The reduction of this vast armament, the retrenchment of the enormous expenses incident to it, were immediately undertaken with a method and despatch which were the result of four years' thorough and practical training, and which would have been impossible under any other circumstances. Every chief of bureau was ordered, on
1865. the 28th of April, to proceed at once to the reduction of expenses in his department to a peace footing, and this before Taylor or Smith had surrendered, and while Jefferson Davis was still at large. The transportation department gave up the railroads of the South to their owners, mainly in better condition than that in which they had been received. They began without delay to sell the immense accumulation of draught animals; eight million dollars were realized from that source within the year. The other departments also disposed of their surplus stores. The stupendous difference which the close of the war at once caused in the finances of the country may be seen in the fact that the appropriations for the army in the fiscal year succeeding the war were $33,814,461 as against $516,240,131 for the preceding year. The army of a million men was brought down, with incredible ease and celerity, to one of twenty-five thousand.

Before the great army melted away into the

[1] May 1, 1865, the aggregate was 1,000,516.— Johnson, Message, December 4, 1865. Appendix, "Globe," p. 4.

greater body of citizens the soldiers enjoyed one final triumph, a march through the capital, undisturbed by death or danger, under the eyes of their highest commanders, military and civilian, and the representatives of the people whose nationality they had saved. The Army of the Potomac and the army of Sherman — such corps of them as were stationed within reach, waiting their discharge — were ordered to pass in review before General Grant and President Johnson, in front of the Executive Mansion, on the 23d and 24th of May. Those who witnessed this solemn yet joyous pageant will never forget it, and will pray that their children may never witness anything like it. For two whole days this formidable host, eight times the number of the entire peace establishment, marched the long stretch of Pennsylvania Avenue, starting from the shadow of the dome of the Capitol, and filling that wide thoroughfare to Georgetown with their serried mass, moving with the easy, yet rapid pace of veterans in cadence step. On a platform in front of the White House stood the President and all the first officers of the state, the judges of the highest court, the most eminent generals and admirals of the army and the navy. The weather, on both days, was the finest a Washington May could afford; the trees of Lafayette Square were leafing out in their strong and delicate verdure.

CH. XVII. 1865.

The Army of the Potomac, which for four years had been the living bulwark of the capital, was rightly given the precedence. Meade himself rode at the head of his column, then came the cavalry headed by Merritt — Sheridan having already started for his new command in the Southwest.

CH. XVII. Custer, commanding the Third Division, had an opportunity of displaying his splendid horsemanship, as his charger, excited beyond control by the pomp and martial music, bolted near the Treasury, and dashed with the speed of the wind past the reviewing stand, but was soon mastered by the young general, who was greeted with stormy applause as he rode gravely by the second time, covered with garlands of flowers, the gifts of friends on the pavement. The same graceful guerdon was given all the leading commanders; even subalterns and hundreds of private soldiers marched decked with these fragrant offerings. The three infantry corps, the Ninth, under Parke, the Fifth, under Griffin,— though Warren was on the stand, hailed with tumultuous cheers by his soldiers,— and the Second, under Humphreys, moved swiftly forward. Wright, with the Sixth, was too far away to join in the day's parade.[1] The memory of hundreds of hard-fought battles, of saddening defeats and glorious victories, of the dead and maimed comrades who had fallen forever out of the thinned ranks, was present to every one who saw the veteran divisions marching by under the charge of generals who had served with them in every vicissitude of battle and siege — trained officers like Crook and Ayres, and young and brilliant soldiers who had risen like rockets from among the volunteers, such as Barlow and Miles. Every brigade had its days of immortal prowess to boast, every tattered guidon had its history.

May, 1865. On the 24th Sherman's army marched in review. The general rode in person at the head of his

[1] His corps was reviewed on the 7th of June.

troops, and was received by the dense multitude that thronged the avenue with a tumult of rapturous plaudits which might have assured him of the peculiar place he was to hold thereafter in the hearts of his fellow-citizens. He and his horse were loaded with flowers; and his principal commanders were not neglected. Howard had just been appointed chief of the Freedmen's Bureau, and therefore Logan commanded the right wing of the Army of the Tennessee, the place he had hoped for, and, his friends insist, deserved, when McPherson fell; Hazen had succeeded to the Fifteenth Corps, and Frank Blair, a chivalrous and martial figure, rode at the head of the Seventeenth. Slocum led the left wing,— the Army of Georgia,— consisting of the Twentieth Corps under Mower, and the Fourteenth under J. C. Davis. The armies of Meade and Sherman were not exclusively from the East and West respectively; for Sherman had the contingent which Hooker and Howard had brought to Chattanooga from the East; and there were regiments from as far West as Wisconsin and Minnesota in the Army of the Potomac. But Sherman's troops were to all intents and purposes Western men, and they were scanned with keen and hospitable interest by the vast crowd of spectators, who were mainly from the East. There was little to choose between the two armies: a trifle more of neatness and discipline, perhaps, among the veterans of Meade; a slight preponderance in physique and in swinging vigor of march among the Westerners; but the trivial differences were lost in the immense and evident likeness, as of brothers in one family. There was a touch of the

CH. XVII. May, 1865.

grotesque in the march of Sherman's legions which was absent from the well-ordered corps of Meade. A small squad of bummers followed each brigade, in their characteristic garb and accessories; small donkeys loaded with queer spoils; goats and game cocks, regimental pets, sitting gravely on the backs of mules; and pickaninnies, the adopted children of companies, showed their black faces between the ranks, their eyes and teeth gleaming with delight.

As a mere spectacle, this march of the mightiest host the continent has ever seen gathered together was grand and imposing, but it was not as a spectacle alone that it affected the beholder most deeply. It was not a mere holiday parade; it was an army of citizens on their way home after a long and terrible war. Their clothes were worn with toilsome marches and pierced with bullets; their banners had been torn with shot and shell and lashed in the winds of a thousand battles; the very drums and fifes that played the ruffles as each battalion passed the President had called out the troops to numberless night alarms, had sounded the onset at Vicksburg and Antietam, had inspired the wasted valor of Kenesaw and Fredericksburg, had throbbed with the electric pulse of victory at Chattanooga and Five Forks. The whole country claimed these heroes as a part of themselves, an infinite gratification forever to the national self-love; and the thoughtful diplomatists who looked on the scene from the reviewing stand could not help seeing that there was a conservative force in an intelligent democracy which the world had never before known.

With all the shouting and the laughter and the joy of this unprecedented ceremony there was one sad and dominant thought which could not be driven from the minds of those who saw it — that of the men who were absent, and who had, nevertheless, richly earned the right to be there. The soldiers, in their shrunken companies, were conscious of the ever-present memories of the brave comrades who had fallen by the way; and in the whole army there was the passionate and unavailing regret that their wise, gentle, and powerful friend, Abraham Lincoln, was gone forever from the house by the avenue, where their loyal votes, supporting their loyal bayonets, had contributed so much to place him.

The world has had many lessons to learn from this great war: the naval fight in Hampton Roads opened a new era in maritime warfare; the marches of Sherman disturbed all previous axioms of logistics; the system of instantaneous intrenchments, adopted by the soldiers of both sides in the latter part of the war, changed the whole character of modern field tactics. But the greatest of all the lessons afforded to humanity by the Titanic struggle in which the American Republic saved its life is the manner in which its armies were levied, and, when the occasion for their employment was over, were dismissed. Though there were periods when recruiting was slow and expensive, yet there were others, when some crying necessity for troops was apparent, that showed almost incredible speed and efficiency in the supply of men. Mr. Stanton, in his report for 1865, says: "After the disasters on the Peninsula, in 1862, over 80,000 troops were

CH. XVII. enlisted, organized, armed, equipped, and sent into the field in less than a month. Sixty thousand troops have repeatedly gone to the field within four weeks; and 90,000 infantry were sent to the armies from the five States of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin within twenty days."

Appendix, "Globe," 1865-66, pp. 10, 11.

This certainly shows a wealth of resources nothing less than imperial, and a power of commanding the physical and moral forces of the nation which has rarely been paralleled. Even more important, by way of instruction and example, was the lesson given the nations by the quick and noiseless dispersion of the enormous host when the war was done. The best friends of the Republic in Europe feared for it in this crisis, and those who disbelieved in the conservative power of democracy were loud in their prophecies of the trouble which would arise on the attempt to disband the army. A million men, with arms in their hands, flushed with intoxicating victory, led by officers schooled in battle, loved and trusted—were they not ready for any adventure? Was it reasonable to believe that they would consent to disband and go to work again at the bidding of a few men in black coats at Washington? Especially after Lincoln was dead, could the tailor from Tennessee direct these myriads of warriors to lay down their arms and melt away into the everyday life of citizens? In America there was no anxiety on this score among the friends of the Union. Without giving the subject a thought they knew there was no danger. The war had been made to execute the laws and to save the national existence, and when those objects were attained there was no thought among the soldiers,

from the general to the humblest file-closer, but to wait for the expected orders from the civil authorities for their disbandment. CH. XVII.

The orders came as a mere matter of course, and were executed with a thoroughness and rapidity which then seemed also a matter of course, but which will appear more and more wonderful to succeeding generations. The muster-out began on the 29th of April, before Lincoln was borne to his grave, before Davis was caught, before the rebels of the trans-Mississippi had ceased uttering their boasts of eternal defiance. First the new recruits, next the veterans whose terms were nearly expired, next those expensive corps the cavalry and artillery, and so on in regular order. Sherman's laurel-crowned army was the first to complete its muster-out, and the heroic Army of the Potomac was not far behind it. These veterans of hundreds of battlefields were soon found mingled in all the pursuits of civic activity. By the 7th of August 641,000 troops had become citizens; by the middle of November over 800,000 had been mustered out — without a fancy in any mind that there was anything else to do. 1865.

The Navy Department had not waited for the return of peace to begin the reduction of expenses. As soon as Fort Fisher fell the retrenchment began, and before Grant started on his last campaign considerable progress had been made in that direction. By the 1st of May the squadrons were reduced one-half, and in July but thirty steamers comprised the entire blockading squadron on the Atlantic and the Gulf. The Potomac and Mississippi flotillas were wholly discontinued in another month. When Mr.

CH. XVII. Welles made his annual report, in December, he could say: "There were in the several blockading squadrons in January last, exclusive of other duty, 471 vessels and 2455 guns. There are now but 29 vessels remaining on the coast, carrying 210 guns, exclusive of howitzers." Superfluous vessels were sold by hundreds and the money covered into the Treasury; thousands of the officers and sailors who had patriotically left the merchant service to fight under the national flag went back to the pursuits of peace.

Report of the Secretary of the Navy for 1865, p. x.

For the purposes of pacification and the reëstablishment of the national authority the country was divided into five grand divisions — that of the Atlantic, commanded by Meade; the Mississippi, by Sherman; the Gulf, by Sheridan; the Tennessee, by Thomas; and the Pacific, by Halleck. These again were subdivided into nineteen departments, and we print here the names of the generals commanding them for the last time, as a roll of the men who survived the war, most favored by fortune and their own merits: Hooker, Hancock, Augur, Ord, Stoneman, Palmer (J. M.), Pope, Terry, Schofield, Sickles, Steedman, Foster (J. G.), Wood (T. J.), Wood (R. C.), Canby, Wright, Reynolds (J. J.), Steele, McDowell. The success or failure of these soldiers in administering the trust confided to them, their relations to the people among whom they were stationed, and to the President who succeeded to the vacant chair of Lincoln, form no part of the story we have attempted to tell.

1865. On the 13th of June the President proclaimed the insurrection at an end in the State of Tennessee; it was not until the second day of April, 1866,

that he proclaimed a state of peace as existing in the rest of the United States, and then he excepted the State of Texas; on the 20th of August, in the same year, he made his final proclamation, announcing the reëstablishment of the national authority in Texas, and thereupon he concluded, "I do further proclaim that the said insurrection is at an end, and that peace, order, tranquillity, and civil authority now exist in and throughout the whole of the United States of America."

Thus the war ended. The carnage and the waste of it had surpassed the darkest forebodings, the most reckless prophecies. On the Union side 2,200,000 men had enlisted;[1] on the Confederate, about 1,000,000. Of these 110,000 Union soldiers were killed or mortally wounded in battle;[2] a quarter of a million died of other causes. The total of deaths by the war on the Northern side amounted to 360,282. The number of the Confederate dead cannot be accurately ascertained; it ranges between 250,000 and 300,000. The expense of the war to the Union, over and above the ordinary expenses of the government, was about $3,250,000,000; to the Confederacy less than half that amount, about $1,500,000,000.

It seems a disheartening paradox to the lovers of peace that all this homicide and spoil gave only a new impulse to the growth and the wealth of the nation. We have seen how the quick eye of Lincoln recognized the fact, on the very night of election, that the voting strength of the country was

[1] There were 2,690,401 names on the rolls, but these included reënlistments.

[2] Sixty-seven thousand and fifty-eight killed · 43,012 died of wounds.

CH. XVII. greater in 1864 than it had been in 1860, and the census of 1870 showed a prodigious advance in prosperity and population. The 31,443,321 of 1860 had in the ten troubled years of war and reconstruction increased to 38,558,371; and the wealth of the country had waxed in an astonishing proportion, from $16,159,616,068 to $30,068,518,507. Even the reconquered States shared in this enormous progress.

CHAPTER XVIII

LINCOLN'S FAME

THE death of Lincoln awoke all over the world a quick and deep emotion of grief and admiration. If he had died in the days of doubt and gloom which preceded his reëlection, he would have been sincerely mourned and praised by the friends of the Union, but its enemies would have curtly dismissed him as one of the necessary and misguided victims of sectional hate. They would have used his death to justify their malevolent forebodings, to point the moral of new lectures on the instability of democracies. But as he had fallen in the moment of a stupendous victory, the halo of a radiant success enveloped his memory and dazzled the eyes even of his most hostile critics. That portion of the press of England and the Continent which had persistently vilified him now joined in the universal chorus of elegiac praise.[1] Cabinets and courts which had been cold

[1] One of the finest poems on the occasion of his death was that in which the London "Punch" made its manly recantation of the slanders with which it had pursued him for four years:

Beside this corpse that bears for winding-sheet
The Stars and Stripes he lived to rear anew,
Between the mourners at his head and feet,
Say, scurrile jester, is there room for you?

Yes, he had lived to shame me from my sneer,
To lame my pencil, and confute my pen;
To make me own this hind of princes peer,
This rail-splitter a true-born king of men.

CH. XVIII. or unfriendly sent their messages of condolence. The French Government, spurred on by their Liberal opponents, took prompt measures to express their admiration for his character and their horror at his taking-off. In the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies the imperialists and the republicans vied with each other in utterances of grief and of praise; the Emperor and the Empress sent their personal condolences to Mrs. Lincoln.

In England there was perhaps a trifle of self-consciousness at the bottom of the official expressions of sympathy. The Foreign Office searched the records for precedents, finding nothing which suited the occasion since the assassination of Henry IV. The sterling English character could not, so gracefully as the courtiers of Napoleon III., bend to praise one who had been treated almost as an enemy for so long. When Sir George Grey opened his dignified and pathetic speech in the House of Commons, by saying that a majority of the people of England sympathized with the North, he was greeted with loud protestations and denials on the part of those who favored the Confederacy. But his references to Lincoln's virtues were cordially received, and when he said that the Queen had written to Mrs. Lincoln with her own hand, "as a widow to a widow," the House broke out in loud cheering. Mr. Disraeli spoke on behalf of the Conservatives with his usual dexterity and with a touch of factitious feeling. "There is," he said, "in the character of the victim, and even in the accessories of his last moments, something so homely and innocent, that it takes the question, as it were, out of all the pomp of history and the

ceremonial of diplomacy; it touches the heart of nations and appeals to the domestic sentiment of mankind." CH. XVIII

In the House of Lords the matter was treated with characteristic reticence. The speech of Lord Russell was full of that rugged truthfulness, that unbending integrity of spirit, which appeared at the time to disguise his real friendliness to America, and which was only the natural expression of a mind extraordinarily upright, and English to the verge of caricature. Lord Derby followed him in a speech of curious elegance, the object of which was rather to launch a polished shaft against his opponents than to show honor to the dead President; and the address proposed by the Government was voted. While these reserved and careful public proceedings were going on, the heart of England was expressing its sympathy with the kindred beyond sea by its thousand organs of utterance in the press, the resolutions of municipal bodies, the pulpit, and the platform.

In Germany the same manifestations were seen of official expressions of sympathy from royalty and its ministers, and of heartfelt affection and grief from the people and their representatives. Otto von Bismarck, then at the beginning of the events which have made his career so illustrious, gave utterance to the courteous regrets of the King of Prussia; the eloquent deputy, William Loewe, from his place in the House, made a brief and touching speech. "The man," he said, "who accomplished such great deeds from the simple desire conscientiously to perform his duty, the man who never wished to be more nor less than the most faithful servant of his people,

CH. XVIII. will find his own glorious place in the pages of history. In the deepest reverence I bow my head before this modest greatness, and I think it is especially agreeable to the spirit of our own nation, with its deep inner life and admiration of self-sacrificing devotion and effort after the ideal, to pay the tribute of veneration to such greatness, exalted as it is by simplicity and modesty."

Two hundred and fifty members of the Chamber signed an address to the American minister in Berlin, full of the cordial sympathy and admiration felt, not only for the dead President, but for the national cause, by the people of Germany. "You are aware," they said, "that Germany has looked with pride and joy on the thousands of her sons who in this struggle have placed themselves so resolutely on the side of law and right. You have seen with what pleasure the victories of the Union have been hailed, and how confident the faith in the final triumph of the great cause and the restoration of the Union in all its greatness has ever been, even in the midst of calamity." Workingmen's clubs, artisans' unions, sent numberless addresses, not merely expressive of sympathy, but conveying singularly just appreciations of the character and career of Lincoln. His death seemed to have marked a step in the education of the people everywhere.

In fact it was among the common people of the entire civilized world that the most genuine and spontaneous manifestations of sorrow and appreciation were produced, and to this fact we attribute the sudden and solid foundation of Lincoln's fame. It requires years, perhaps centuries, to build the

structure of a reputation which rests upon the opinion of those distinguished for learning or intelligence; the progress of opinion from the few to the many is slow and painful. But in the case of Lincoln the many imposed their opinion all at once; he was canonized, as he lay on his bier, by the irresistible decree of countless millions. The greater part of the aristocracy of England thought little of him, but the burst of grief from the English people silenced in an instant every discordant voice. It would have been as imprudent to speak slightingly of him in London as it was in New York. Especially among the Dissenters was honor and reverence shown to his name. The humbler people instinctively felt that their order had lost its wisest champion. CH. XVIII.

Not only among those of Saxon blood was this outburst of emotion seen. In France a national manifestation took place which the Government disliked, but did not think it wise to suppress. The students of Paris marched in a body to the American Legation to express their sympathy. A two-cent subscription was started to strike a massive gold medal; the money was soon raised, but the committee was forced to have the work done in Switzerland. A committee of French Liberals brought the medal to the American minister, to be sent to Mrs. Lincoln. "Tell her," said Eugène Pelletan, "the heart of France is in that little box." The inscription had a double sense; while honoring the dead Republican, it struck at the Empire. "Lincoln — the Honest Man; abolished slavery, reëstablished the Union; Saved the Republic, without veiling the Statue of Liberty."

CH. XVIII. Everywhere on the Continent the same swift apotheosis of the people's hero was seen. An Austrian deputy said to the writer, "Among my people his memory has already assumed superhuman proportions; he has become a myth, a type of ideal democracy." Almost before the earth closed over him he began to be the subject of fable. The Freemasons of Europe generally regard him as one of them — his portrait in Masonic garb is often displayed; yet he was not one of that brotherhood. The Spiritualists claim him as their most illustrious adept, but he was not a Spiritualist; and there is hardly a sect in the Western world, from the Calvinist to the atheist, but affects to believe he was of their opinion.

A collection of the expressions of sympathy and condolence which came to Washington from foreign governments, associations, and public bodies of all sorts was made by the State Department, and afterwards published by order of Congress. It forms a large quarto of a thousand pages, and embraces the utterances of grief and regret from every country under the sun, in almost every language spoken by man.

But admired and venerated as he was in Europe, he was best understood and appreciated at home. It is not to be denied that in his case, as in that of all heroic personages who occupy a great place in history, a certain element of legend mingles with his righteous fame. He was a man, in fact, especially liable to legend. We have been told by farmers in Central Illinois that the brown thrush did not sing for a year after he died. He was gentle and merciful, and therefore he seems in a cer-

tain class of annals to have passed all his time in soothing misfortune and pardoning crime. He had more than his share of the shrewd native humor, and therefore the loose jest-books of two centuries have been ransacked for anecdotes to be attributed to him. He was a great and powerful lover of mankind, especially of those not favored by fortune. One night he had a dream, which he repeated the next morning to the writer of these lines, which quaintly illustrates his unpretending and kindly democracy. He was in some great assembly; the people made a lane to let him pass. "He is a common-looking fellow," some one said. Lincoln in his dream turned to his critic and replied, in his Quaker phrase, "Friend, the Lord prefers common-looking people: that is why he made so many of them." He that abases himself shall be exalted. Because Lincoln kept himself in such constant sympathy with the common people, whom he respected too highly to flatter or mislead, he was rewarded by a reverence and a love hardly ever given to a human being. Among the humble working people of the South whom he had made free, this veneration and affection easily passed into the supernatural. At a religious meeting among the negroes of the Sea Islands a young man expressed the wish that he might see Lincoln. A gray-headed negro rebuked the rash aspiration: "No man see Linkum. Linkum walk as Jesus walk—no man see Linkum."[1] CH. XVIII.

But leaving aside these fables, which are a natural enough expression of a popular awe and love,

[1] Mr. Hay had this story from Captain E. W. Hooper immediately after it happened. It has been told with many variations.

CH. XVIII. it seems to us no more just estimate of Lincoln's relation to his time has ever been made — nor perhaps ever will be — than that uttered by one of the wisest and most American of thinkers, Ralph Waldo Emerson, a few days after the assassination. We cannot forbear quoting a few words of this remarkable discourse, which shows how Lincoln seemed to the greatest of his contemporaries: "A plain man of the people, an extraordinary fortune attended him. Lord Bacon says, 'Manifest virtues procure reputation; occult ones fortune.' . . His occupying the chair of state was a triumph of the good sense of mankind and of the public conscience. . . . He grew according to the need; his mind mastered the problem of the day; and as the problem grew, so did his comprehension of it. Rarely was a man so fitted to the event. . . It cannot be said that there is any exaggeration of his worth. If ever a man was fairly tested, he was. There was no lack of resistance, nor of slander, nor of ridicule. . . . Then what an occasion was the whirlwind of the war! Here was no place for holiday magistrate, nor fair-weather sailor; the new pilot was hurried to the helm in a tornado. In four years — four years of battle-days — his endurance, his fertility of resources, his magnanimity, were sorely tried and never found wanting. There by his courage, his justice, his even temper, his fertile counsel, his humanity, he stood a heroic figure in the center of a heroic epoch. He is the true history of the American people in his time; the true representative of this continent — father of his country, the pulse of twenty millions throbbing in his heart, the thought of their minds articulated by his tongue."

The quick instinct by which the world recognized him, even at the moment of his death, as one of its greatest men, was not deceived. It has been confirmed by the sober thought of a quarter of a century. The writers of each nation compare him with their first popular hero. The French find points of resemblance in him to Henry IV.; the Dutch liken him to William of Orange; the cruel stroke of murder and treason by which all three perished in the height of their power naturally suggests the comparison, which is strangely justified in both cases, though the two princes were so widely different in character. Lincoln had the wit, the bonhomie, the keen, practical insight into affairs of the Béarnais; and the tyrannous moral sense, the wide comprehension, the heroic patience of the Dutch patriot, whose motto might have served equally well for the American President — *Sævis tranquillus in undis.* European historians speak of him in words reserved for the most illustrious names. Merle d'Aubigné says, "The name of Lincoln will remain one of the greatest that history has to inscribe on its annals." Henri Martin predicts nothing less than a universal apotheosis: "This man will stand out in the traditions of his country and the world as an incarnation of the people, and of modern democracy itself." Emilio Castelar, in an oration against slavery in the Spanish Cortes, called him "humblest of the humble before his conscience, greatest of the great before history."

In this country, where millions still live who were his contemporaries, and thousands who knew him personally, where the envies and jealousies

CH. XVIII. which dog the footsteps of success still linger in the hearts of a few, where journals still exist that loaded his name for four years with daily calumny, and writers of memoirs vainly try to make themselves important by belittling him, his fame has become as universal as the air, as deeply rooted as the hills. The faint discords are not heard in the wide chorus that hails him second to none and equaled by Washington alone. The eulogies of him form a special literature. Preachers, poets, soldiers, and statesmen employ the same phrases of unconditional love and reverence. Men speaking with the authority of fame use unqualified superlatives. Lowell, in an immortal ode, calls him "New birth of our new soil, the first American." General Sherman says, "Of all the men I ever met, he seemed to possess more of the elements of greatness, combined with goodness, than any other." General Grant, after having met the rulers of almost every civilized country on earth, said Lincoln impressed him as the greatest intellectual force with which he had ever come in contact.

Sherman, "Memoirs." Vol. II., p. 328.

He is spoken of, with scarcely less of enthusiasm, by the more generous and liberal spirits among those who revolted against his election and were vanquished by his power. General Longstreet calls him "the greatest man of rebellion times, the one matchless among forty millions for the peculiar difficulties of the period." An eminent Southern orator, referring to our mixed Northern and Southern ancestry, says: "From the union of those colonists, from the straightening of their purposes and the crossing of their blood, slowly

"Battles and Leaders." Vol. II., p. 405.

perfecting through a century, came he who stands as the first typical American, the first who comprehended within himself all the strength and gentleness, all the majesty and grace of this republic — Abraham Lincoln." CH. XVIII.

H. W. Grady.

It is not difficult to perceive the basis of this sudden and world-wide fame, nor rash to predict its indefinite duration. There are two classes of men whose names are more enduring than any monument — the great writers; and the men of great achievement, the founders of states, the conquerors. Lincoln has the singular fortune to belong to both these categories; upon these broad and stable foundations his renown is securely built. Nothing would have more amazed him while he lived than to hear himself called a man of letters; but this age has produced few greater writers. We are only recording here the judgment of his peers. Emerson ranks him with Æsop and Pilpay in his lighter moods, and says: "The weight and penetration of many passages in his letters, messages, and speeches, hidden now by the very closeness of their application to the moment, are destined to a wide fame. What pregnant definitions, what unerring common-sense, what foresight, and on great occasions what lofty, and more than national, what human tone! His brief speech at Gettysburg will not easily be surpassed by words on any recorded occasion."

His style extorted the high praise of French Academicians; Montalembert commended it as a model for the imitation of princes. Many of his phrases form part of the common speech of mankind. It is true that in his writings the range of

"La Victoire du Nord," p. 133.

CH. XVIII. subjects is not great; he is concerned chiefly with the political problems of the time, and the moral considerations involved in them. But the range of treatment is remarkably wide; it runs from the wit, the gay humor, the florid eloquence of his stump speeches to the marvelous sententiousness and brevity of the letter to Greeley and the address at Gettysburg, and the sustained and lofty grandeur of the Second Inaugural.

The more his writings are studied in connection with the important transactions of his age the higher will his reputation stand in the opinion of the lettered class. But the men of study and research are never numerous; and it is principally as a man of action that the world at large will regard him. It is the story of his objective life that will forever touch and hold the heart of mankind. His birthright was privation and ignorance — not peculiar to his family, but the universal environment of his place and time; he burst through those enchaining conditions by the force of native genius and will; vice had no temptation for him; his course was as naturally upward as the skylark's; he won, against all conceivable obstacles, a high place in an exacting profession and an honorable position in public and private life; he became the foremost representative of a party founded on an uprising of the national conscience against a secular wrong, and thus came to the awful responsibilities of power in a time of terror and gloom. He met them with incomparable strength and virtue. Caring for nothing but the public good, free from envy or jealous fears, he surrounded himself with the leading men of his party, his most formidable

rivals in public esteem, and through four years of stupendous difficulties he was head and shoulders above them all in the vital qualities of wisdom, foresight, knowledge of men, and thorough comprehension of measures. Personally opposed, as the radicals claim, by more than half of his own party in Congress, and bitterly denounced and maligned by his open adversaries, he yet bore himself with such extraordinary discretion and skill, that he obtained for the Government all the legislation it required, and so impressed himself upon the national mind that without personal effort or solicitation he became the only possible candidate of his party for reëlection, and was chosen by an almost unanimous vote of the Electoral Colleges. CH. XVIII.

His qualities would have rendered his administration illustrious even in time of peace; but when we consider that in addition to the ordinary work of the executive office he was forced to assume the duties of Commander-in-Chief of the National forces engaged in the most complex and difficult war of modern times, the greatness of spirit as well as the intellectual strength he evinced in that capacity is nothing short of prodigious. After times will wonder, not at the few and unimportant mistakes he may have committed, but at the intuitive knowledge of his business that he displayed. We would not presume to express a personal opinion in this matter. We use the testimony only of the most authoritative names. General W. T. Sherman has repeatedly expressed the admiration and surprise with which he has read Mr. Lincoln's correspondence with his generals, and his opinion of the remarkable correctness of his military views.

CH. XVIII. General W. F. Smith says: "I have long held to the opinion that at the close of the war Mr. Lincoln was the superior of his generals in his comprehension of the effect of strategic movements and the proper method of following up victories to their legitimate conclusions." General J. H. Wilson holds the same opinion; and Colonel Robert N. Scott, in whose lamented death the army lost one of its most vigorous and best-trained intellects, frequently called Mr. Lincoln "the ablest strategist of the war."

"Lincoln Memorial Album," p. 555.

To these qualifications of high literary excellence, and easy practical mastery of affairs of transcendent importance, we must add, as an explanation of his immediate and world-wide fame, his possession of certain moral qualities rarely combined, in such high degree, in one individual. His heart was so tender that he would dismount from his horse in a forest to replace in their nest young birds which had fallen by the roadside; he could not sleep at night if he knew that a soldier-boy was under sentence of death; he could not, even at the bidding of duty or policy, refuse the prayer of age or helplessness in distress. Children instinctively loved him; they never found his rugged features ugly; his sympathies were quick and seemingly unlimited. He was absolutely without prejudice of class or condition. Frederick Douglass says he was the only man of distinction he ever met who never reminded him by word or manner of his color; he was as just and generous to the rich and well born as to the poor and humble — a thing rare among politicians. He was tolerant even of evil: though no man can ever have lived with a loftier scorn of meanness

and selfishness, he yet recognized their existence and counted with them. He said one day, with a flash of cynical wisdom worthy of La Rochefoucauld, that honest statesmanship was the employment of individual meannesses for the public good. He never asked perfection of any one; he did not even insist, for others, upon the high standards he set up for himself. At a time before the word was invented he was the first of opportunists. With the fire of a reformer and a martyr in his heart he yet proceeded by the ways of cautious and practical statecraft. He always worked with things as they were, while never relinquishing the desire and effort to make them better. To a hope which saw the Delectable Mountains of absolute justice and peace in the future, to a faith that God in his own time would give to all men the things convenient to them, he added a charity which embraced in its deep bosom all the good and the bad, all the virtues and the infirmities of men, and a patience like that of nature, which in its vast and fruitful activity knows neither haste nor rest. CH. XVIII.

A character like this is among the precious heirlooms of the Republic; and by a special good fortune every part of the country has an equal claim and pride in it. Lincoln's blood came from the veins of New England emigrants, of Middle State Quakers, of Virginia planters, of Kentucky pioneers; he himself was one of the men who grew up with the earliest growth of the Great West. Every jewel of his mind or his conduct sheds radiance on each portion of the nation. The marvelous symmetry and balance of his intellect and character may have owed something to this varied envi-

CH. XVIII. ronment of his race, and they may fitly typify the variety and solidity of the Republic. It may not be unreasonable to hope that his name and his renown may be forever a bond of union to the country which he loved with an affection so impartial, and served, in life and in death, with such entire devotion.

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